It is with great sadness that we record the sudden and premature death of our colleague, co-editor and friend on Sunday 11 November 1984. He had been an editor since the early days of the Review and over the last few years had acted as Book Reviews Editor.

In fact he had been in a working session less than two days before he died, planning what is to be our Tenth Anniversary Issue (No.32). The theme we were working out is to be 'Political Practice and Socialist Intellectuals'. We hope we can make that issue on which he was working a fitting memorial to him, for the theme sums up the central concern of his life. A full tribute will appear in its pages.

Anyone who was taught by him at Legon in Ghana or in Sheffield where he had taught for 15 years would appreciate that he was a scholar to his fingertips. He looked scholarly, used words meticulously, was surrounded by books and papers and had an especially clinical and challenging mind. But he was not content to remain a by-stander and commentator on political events. For him political practice and particularly practical solidarity with peoples in the Third World — in India, Indo-China as well as Africa — was always his concern.

Our great and heartfelt sympathies go out to Judy Mohan, our co-worker, and his two sons, Sean and Giles. We shall miss him too.
Editorial

We begin this issue with Luckham and Bekele’s examination of the involvement of the USA and the USSR in the affairs and the wars in the Horn of Africa. In the first part of their article, which appeared in ROAPE 30, they analysed the local and international cycles and the links between them. Here they detail the activities of external powers and offer interpretations of their policies which question some of the arguments put forward by other contributions to ROAPE 30.

The central theme of this issue is the control of labour-power. This has always been a problem for those who have sought to get others to work for them, whether they have made recourse to slavery or forced labour, to ‘family’ labour or to free wage labour. The combination of coercion and inducement must be used to secure labour, to put it to work and to keep it at work. More coercion than inducement has been the feature of the establishment of capitalism. The history of what Marx called ‘original’ (‘primitive’ — German ursprungliche) accumulation has always been one of force and violence. Even when people have been forced into wage labour, the history of Africa clearly shows how employers cannot trust to the market alone to ensure their command over labour power. In countries dominated by settler capitalism, pass-laws, prison labour and coercive legislation were — and are, in South Africa — used to force agricultural labourers not only to work but to accept intolerable conditions of work. Elsewhere, capitalist agriculture has sometimes failed to take root because capital lacked the means of coercion to secure a supply of wage labour. It has had, as in the pre-capitalist economies, to resort to the use of dependent members of the family (those excluded from direct access to the means of production) — wives, sons, daughters, bonded labour and apprentices.

The essays are all concerned with West Africa. David examines the formation of a settler state in Liberia. Plange looks at the establishment of the colonial political economy in northern Ghana, created as a labour reserve for capitalism in the south. Van Hear also focuses on northern Ghana, but on post-independence capital investment in agriculture in that area. Pittin’s report on women workers in northern Nigeria breaks new ground empirically and complements Dennis’ study of textile workers in southern Nigeria in our recent women’s issue (ROAPE 27/28).

Magdalene David’s article examines the establishment of a settler state in Liberia. She shows how difficult it was for the American Colonisation Society and
its successor, the independent Liberian state, to secure the revenues it needed and to create the conditions for capital accumulation. Themes familiar from the history of colonial and settler societies elsewhere in West and Southern Africa emerge here: the need for the colonial state and settler merchants to break the monopoly of African intermediaries over trade with the interior; the attempt to limit foreign traders to designated points of entry; the export of labour to Europe in return for commissions paid to the state; the difficulty of securing an adequate supply of labour for plantations; the use of 'recaptured' slaves freed to Liberia and local people as 'apprentices', along with women ('family labour') and poor settlers to meet this need; vulnerability to falling prices on export markets.

The Liberian state lacked the force available to a colonial power or to settlers with a metropolitan army to support them. The 'port of entry' laws, designed to enable settlers to control the import-export trade, reduced government revenues from taxing foreign trade. Dark-skinned planters challenged the mulatto oligarchy for control of the state, which they used to appropriate opportunities in commerce and government employment.

David identifies the specific dilemmas of the Liberian state in the context of an analysis of the general problems of the 'unsteady' peripheral state in managing relations between its own society and the world economy and, within its own society, 'its involvement ... in the transformation and reproduction of a wide range of social relations, including political, ethnic and economic relations'.

Nii Plange's article discusses the implantation of the colonial state in Ghana and the distinctive form which this took in what became the Northern Territories. Here, too, we find the suppression of an indigenous polity, Ashanti — one more formidable than any in Liberia — which controlled access to the interior. Labour was forcibly recruited in the North, for the armed services, public works and southern mines. The government of the Gold Coast disposed of the power of the metropolitan state. It delegated the administration of the north to the Chief Commissioner and the district commissioners who were allowed extensive arbitrary powers as a matter of policy to repress resistance, to redirect trade to the south and to recruit labour. They in turn ran their fiefs through 'sergeant-major' chiefs, similar to the warrant chiefs in parts of Nigeria, who lacked any authority other than that conferred by their colonial master. Foreign investment, commercial development and Western education were deliberately discouraged. The North was effectively excluded from the legislative council and a Northern Territorial Council was only formed in 1946.

Plange shows that the apparent 'isolation' and 'backwardness' of the North, and the authoritarianism and arbitrariness of its administration were not the result of colonial neglect, but followed from the nature and purposes of its integration into the colonial capitalist economy.

Van Hear describes the on-going struggles in northern Ghana where post-independent investment in capitalist rice farming has provided employment for wage labour previously unknown in this colonial labour reserve. High consumer prices and government subsidies for machinery created opportunities for civil servants and army officers to invest in rice farming. Initially, the new industry appeared to be successful. In 1975 Ghana was, for a moment, self-sufficient in rice. Labour was recruited from villages, supplemented by casual labour from Tamale. However, disillusioned by their employers' failures to honour promises,
male peasant farmers withdrew their labour and concentrated instead on their own farms. Capitalist farmers moved to new areas to find new land — having ruined the soil they had cultivated — and to tap cheaper supplies of labour. Here they recruited women and children but met with equal but different resistance. Whereas men had exploited the conditions of labour shortage to demand higher wages, women reduced their working day to reclaim time for domestic labour. Meanwhile, casual labourers organised themselves to resist exploitation. They organised themselves into work gangs for particular tasks and demanded higher wages in return. Farmers sought to increase the work specified in the contracts. Such 'cheats' (dariga men) were marked down in the labour recruitment centres and avoided or found their farms sabotaged. Van Hear argues that agricultural labourers were able to take advantage of the scarcity of labour to raise the real wage rate during the rice boom while the peasant economy provided the conditions for withdrawal from wage labour when wages fell or conditions of work were unacceptable. In the absence of any evidence of a long-term decline in household-based production and the creation of a dispossessed rural proletariat, capitalist farmers will always be confronted with problems of recruiting labourers and getting them to work.

Pittin's study of women workers takes place in a factory producing electrical components in Zaria. While there have been recent and important developments in research on the internationalisation of the sexual division of labour in industrial employment, most empirical studies have taken place in South-East Asia and in Latin America (notably in the Free Trade Zones). There is a terrible dearth of studies of any kind of women in industrial employment in Africa and it is not even clear yet whether the same general processes of gender segregation and subordination under capital are being reproduced in factories in Nigeria, for example, as they are in Malaysia. Pittin applies the same general thesis that capital uses pre-existing gender divisions to structure and control its labour force. In the Zaria factory, the cultural construction of gender has affected promotion as foremen and the male-dominated union has collaborated with the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and discriminated against women workers in work, benefits and promotion. However, the process of proletarianisation of women in Africa (on which question Bryceson's article in ROAPE 17 provided much food for thought) has differed from much of the rest of the Third World. We must wait for further work to establish whether women will be compelled to provide even cheaper labour than men. Pittin writes from the standpoint of the organisation Women in Nigeria (WIN) which is already struggling against the discrimination and crude chauvinism which women experience in Nigeria (see their press release in this issue).

Women in Nigeria have been subjected to the extraordinary pronouncement on the part of the Kano State Government that 'single women' should get married within three months or be 'dealt with' — apparently in an effort to force them to withdraw from productive labour, and to restore the 'moral basis' of society. Similar events have occurred in Zimbabwe where last year the government carried out an extraordinary swoop on women (ostensibly, though not actually, 'unaccompanied by males') who were blamed for the moral and social problems of the cities and packed off, briefly, for rehabilitation. Elsewhere, measures are being revived or created to force labour into those productive sectors which governments have prioritised. Faced with a shortage of food in the towns (and in much of the country) and a scarcity of labour on plantations and state farms, the
governments of Tanzania and Mozambique have introduced measures to round up 'loiterers' and to send them off to engage in honest agricultural labour. Shaidi's Briefing examines Tanzania's most recent attempt to expel urban residents to rural areas, the 1983 Human Resources Deployment Act.

In recent years, Nigerian governments have offered massive subsidies to 'businessmen, civil servants, military personnel, and rural elites' to engage in agricultural production. They range from bank loans and guarantees, cheap fertilisers, management services, to access to irrigated land and government grain purchases. A number of these 'overnight' farmers were prominent in the last military government and close to the present one. However, as Oculi points out in his Briefing, this "class knows how to farm the bureaucracy for personal wealth but not how to farm the land!" Most of its investments are in battery chickens, rabbits and 'yellow' maize for animal feed. Even with massive subsidies, it lacks control over cheap enough labour to make a success of capitalist farming.

To further its 'Green Revolution', and its ties with the US administration, the Shagari regime promoted foreign investment in Nigerian agriculture. They, too, have concentrated their investments in poultry and in managing joint projects with Nigerian government agencies. They are more interested in markets for imported machinery, chemicals and feedlots than in organising crop production.

As Robin Cohen pointed out in ROAPE 19, the resistance of labourers to the domination of capital takes many forms, not always explicitly defined in terms of class struggle. They provide evidence of the capacities of producers to refuse the claims made in them by capitalists and to seek to make their own histories, however unpropitious the circumstances in which they are compelled to do so.

Pepe Roberts and Gavin Williams
Foreign Powers and Militarism in the Horn of Africa: Part II

Robin Luckham and Dawit Bekele

The first part of this article, which appeared in ROAPE 30, set an explanation of the new militarisation of the Horn in two, interacting contexts: the long history of struggles between states in the Horn for hegemony, and the struggle for world hegemony that constitutes the New Cold War. This part offers a systematic review of the record of involvement of the USA and USSR in the Horn over the last 20 years and seeks to uncover the (different) motivations and compulsions that explain their behaviour.

The Western Military Connection

In clear contrast to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, the two superpowers were militarily entrenched in the Horn well before the crucial historical turning points in 1974-78; the United States in Ethiopia (documented by Fred Halliday in ROAPE 10) and the Soviet Union in Somalia and (more precariously) the Sudan. As far as the NATO powers was concerned Africa, like the remainder of the ‘South’ below the Tropic of Cancer, was (and still is) formally excluded from the purview of the alliance command structure. In practice there operated an informal division of labour under which arms and ‘security’ were provided under neo-colonial arrangements with the former colonial powers (France’s military role in Africa is described in ROAPE 24).

Through its assistance, the United States in effect underwrote the imperial regime for two-and-a-half decades, permitting it to reproduce and in certain respects reorganise the quasi-feudal class structure on which it was founded. It can be plausibly argued that the arms and military assistance supplied to the government of the Emperor Haile Selassie (and until 1977 his military successors) were a straightforward payment of rent for the Kagnew base in Eritrea — a link in the US global electronic surveillance work — and for a class alliance with the ruler of a country with a central position in the OAU. Indeed, US policy-makers could hardly have been more explicit. According to a Pentagon officer interviewed by the Senate Committee military aid to Ethiopia

... was really Kagnew rent-money, and if the Emperor wanted it in solid gold Cadillacs, he could have it that way.

Following the revolution and the subsequent turn-around in regional alliances in 1977-78, US arms and assistance were before long redirected to the other countries of the region, Kenya, Sudan and Somalia. It is remarkable, however, that the share of the Horn in US arms transfers to Africa was almost exactly the
same (67 per cent) in 1975-82 as it had been in the previous 15-year period. And it could still, as in the past, be regarded as rent paid for alliances and military facilities under the new 'regional security framework' formalised in the agreements negotiated in 1980 by the Carter administration with Kenya, Somalia and the Sudan.

The exchange has comprised much more, however, than arms in return for military facilities for the rapid deployment forces. It covers a broader range of transactions between the US and the local ruling classes. These are explicitly stated in the programme justifications for US security assistance: support by all three countries for US policies in the Gulf, the Horn and the Indian Ocean; Sudan's endorsement of the Camp David agreement and President Reagan's Middle East 'Peace Initiative'; participation in joint military exercises with US forces (notably Operation Brightstar, held in 1982 and repeated in 1983); and encouragement of US investment, especially in Kenya which has a broader continental role as the regional headquarters for many US firms operating in Africa (see US Defence, Congressional Representation: Security Assistance Programmes FX 1984, (1983)).

Nevertheless there was a significant change in the financial terms of the arms transfers which cemented the alliance. Ninety-two per cent of the weapons supplied by the US to the Horn between 1975 and 1982 were sold on commercial or foreign military sales terms — to be repaid at commercial rates of interest — compared with only 3 per cent of those transferred from 1960 to 1974. This reflected an overall shift in US military assistance, originating in the Nixon Doctrine but continued under the Carter administration. US clients in the Third World were made responsible for their own military security, in partnership with the United States but paying for it out of their own pockets — hence linking their armament more directly to accumulation in the US arms industries. In effect this meant that the recipients of US weapons in the Horn were themselves expected

### Table I: US Arms Transfers and Military Assistance to the Horn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Other Horn</th>
<th>Total Africa</th>
<th>Ethiopia as per cent of Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total arms transfers 1960-74 ($m)</td>
<td>179.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>272.4</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual average ($m)</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent on commercial terms</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total arms transfers 1975-82 ($m)</td>
<td>115.4</td>
<td>314.2</td>
<td>638.4</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual average ($m)</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent on commercial terms</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of officers and men trained in USA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 1960-74</td>
<td>3,211</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>5,342</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 1975-82</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>2,061</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual average 1960-74</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual average 1975-82</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>258</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** US Dept. of Defence, Security Assistance Agency, Fiscal Year Series as of September 1982.

**Notes:** The average was $38.6m for the three years (1975-77) in which the military assistance programme was actually in operation.
to bear much of the financial burden for the use by the US of their strategic territory and military facilities. In return the local ruling classes received assurances (much shop-soiled after the Ethiopian and Iranian revolutions) of US support in the event of threats to their security.

The contradictions written into these rental terms were so glaring, however, that they soon had to be revised. Countries whose economies were overwhelmed by recession, large debt burdens and the corruption of their ruling classes were quite simply unable to pay for arms. Thus, in 1982, payment was waived upon half of Sudan’s $100m Foreign Military Sales (FMS) commitments, and subsequent deliveries of military hardware have been under the concessional Military Assistance Programme (MAP). At the same time Sudan has received substantial allocations of non-project aid under the Economic Support Fund ($100 million in 1982 and £92 million in 1983) and of food under PL480 ($27 million in 1982 and $51 million in 1983). Somalia too was transferred from the commercial FMS programme to a similar package of MAP assistance and economic support, although the amounts provided were somewhat smaller. Kenya’s economy was considered strong enough for FMS payments to continue, although by 1983 half of its US-supplied hardware was being provided on concessional terms and it too was receiving substantial non-project economic support through the Economic Support Fund and PL480. At the same time as proposing increases in the grant element of arms transfers for FY 1984, the US administration stipulated paternalistically that ‘Kenya cannot afford, nor should it attempt, any other major weapons systems purchases’.

Nevertheless it would clearly not be sufficient to analyse the crisis in the Horn solely in terms of the search by the United States for strategic real estate and outlets for its arms industries. Not only would this leave out the role of the Soviet Union (to be returned to later) but also that of the United States’ partners in NATO and its local allies in the Arab world.

Djibouti and Kenya still shelter under the post-colonial security umbrella. The former did not become independent from France until 1977 and remains a neo-colonial preserve, its economy and defence being underwritten in exchange for basing rights for France’s Indian Ocean naval forces. Until the late 1970s, indeed, France had a larger permanent naval force in the area than any other outside power. Britain maintains stronger military ties with Kenya than with any other African country, including a military training facility (the only one operated by the UK in Africa), joint exercises with the Kenyan armed forces, substantial arms sales and training teams for the Kenyan military and security establishments; although it now operates in loose partnership with the United States.

At the same time the United States’ European allies have greatly increased their arms deliveries to the Horn (Table II), both in absolute terms (delivering arms to the value of $880 million in the five years 1976-80, as compared with only $69 million in the preceding 10-year period) and relative to the US. In 1976-80 the aggregate military sales of France, the UK, West Germany and Italy to the Horn were more than three times larger than those of the United States, having been less than those of the latter throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. This was partly the result of the loss of the Ethiopian market by the US; and partly in consequence of more aggressive arms sales by the Europeans, whose industries are more dependent upon exports and who were able to make use of post-colonial
### Table II: Main Suppliers of Arms to the Horn of Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Share of arms supplied 1966-75 (percentages)</th>
<th>Total value of arms 1966-75 ($m)</th>
<th>Share of arms supplied 1976-80 (percentages)</th>
<th>Total value of arms 1976-80 ($m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Other NATO¹</td>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Communist²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Horn</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Africa</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** USACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1966-75 and 1971-80.*

**Notes**
1. 'Other NATO' includes only the four largest other NATO suppliers: France, the UK, West Germany and Canada in 1966-75; France, the UK, West Germany and Italy in 1976-80.
2. 'Other Communist' includes Czechoslovakia, Poland and the People's Republic of China in 1966-75; and Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia in 1971-80.
connections to develop their markets. Thus in Somalia it was initially Italy which became the country’s largest supplier of arms after the departure of the Soviet Union. In Kenya the UK shared the market with the US, France and Switzerland. In the Sudan, West Germany was the largest supplier, followed some distance behind by the US.

However, none of the European countries can afford to supply weapons on concessional terms. Thus the current US shift from foreign military sales to grant military assistance will almost certainly have the effect of tying Somalia, Sudan and Kenya into the US regional security framework more comprehensively than before — the more so because of their economic problems and the burden of their existing military debts.

The Horn of Africa and the ‘Arc of Crisis’

By the late 1960s the Soviet Union had become the largest single supplier of arms in the Horn, covering 45 per cent of shipments from 1966 to 1975, compared with the 29 per cent supplied by the United States. Following the Ogaden War, the USSR’s share rose still further to over half (54 per cent) in 1976-80, whilst that of the US dropped to only 7 per cent. But it is misleading to compare the interests of the powers in one piece of geostrategic real estate, the Horn, in isolation. The epicentre of Western security concerns is the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. The main basing area for the US rapid deployment force (renamed US Central Command, USCENTCOM, in January 1983) covers Egypt and the Arabian peninsula as well as the Horn. More broadly still, the Horn fits into the ‘arc of crisis’ (we continue to use the phrase because it was so widely used in the formative years of the new cold war, although it has now gone out of fashion among strategic analysts themselves), stretching from Pakistan in the north-east, across the Persian Gulf and the Middle East to Egypt and then down to Kenya in the Sudan.

As can be seen in Table III, there exists a rough parity between US and the Soviet in arms transfers inside the narrower basing area, of the rapid deployment force and within the broader ‘arc of crisis’. Moreover, the balance tilts firmly in favour of the West if one adds in supplies by other members of the NATO alliance. The NATO powers provided at least 30 per cent of the Horn’s weapons in 1976-80, 64 per cent of those supplied in the RDF region and 55 per cent of those in the ‘arc of crisis’, compared with 56 per cent, 26 per cent and 37 per cent by the Warsaw Pact.

Table III: Main Arms Suppliers to Horn and Arc of Crisis, 1976-80 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>USSR</th>
<th>Com-</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>NATO</th>
<th>Residual</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horn of Africa</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horn, Egypt and Arabian Peninsula</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>12,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arc of Crisis</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>43,965</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculated from USACDA, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1976-80.

Note: ‘Arc of Crisis’ includes Pakistan, Afghanistan, Middle East and Horn of Africa.

If our argument that weapons are valorised through arms sales and military...
conflict in the Third World is valid anywhere, it is within this broad region. The 'arc of crisis' is the most important of the four 'resource rich regions of instability' defined by the US Pentagon. Above all it is the point of accumulation of roughly half of the arms exported to developing countries and of two-fifths of the total global trade in arms. No less than 64 per cent of all US arms exports to the Third World are transferred to clients in the 'arc of crisis', almost a quarter of these to Egypt, the Arabian peninsula and the Horn. For the four other major Western suppliers (France, the UK, West Germany and Italy) the corresponding proportion is 50 per cent and for the Soviet Union it is 46 per cent.

It seems legitimate to contend that the militarisation of the arc of crisis has helped the international arms industry through a structural crisis brought on by the end of the Vietnam procurement cycle, detente and the process of military innovation itself. And further that it has played a role in mediating the dislocations which arose in the international division of labour during the 1970s, by recycling the petro-dollars which accrued to the possessors of oil-bearing land. From this perspective, therefore, the conflicts in the area — the Iran-Iraq war, the Lebanon, the Ogaden and Eritrea etc. — can be regarded as a grisly international potlatch of weapons, liquidating vast quantities of military hardware. In this way they have sustained the military-industrial complexes of the major suppliers — more so however those of Western Europe whose arms industries would not survive without exports, than of either one of the superpowers.

Such has certainly been the result of the revaluation of strategic real estate and of the accumulation and destruction upon it of weapons. But historical causation cannot be established simply by arguing backwards from consequences. A more complete analysis would have to be able to show how armament has interlocked with the interests of the major powers, which certainly subsume arms sales and military procurement but cannot be reduced to them. Moreover it would have to pay more regard to the social forces sustaining conflict, such as the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Gulf or the culmination of the hegemonic cycle and the rise of the nationalities in the Horn.

Western policy statements normally give equal prominence to the increasing 'turbulence' or 'instability' of the region as a whole and to 'the Soviet threat'. Although both are highly ideological concerns, as explanations they cannot be simply rejected out of hand. Since the mid-1960s the USSR has gradually built up a blue-water navy, breaking the Western powers' monopoly of the seas and establishing a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. During the past decade and a half the Soviet Union has indeed succeeded in establishing its presence in the Arabian peninsula and the Horn, providing a military lifeline for two 'states of socialist orientation', Ethiopia and South Yemen. The airlift of large quantities of military equipment to Ethiopia in 1977-78 established — along with the earlier airlift to Angola — that the USSR has the ability to 'project its power' (to use Pentagon terminology) in the region, even though its rapid deployment capacity remains less than that of USCENTCOM.

But in what sense has this constituted a threat to Western strategic interests in the region? How far have the West's own military activities actually been a response to this threat? Or are they shaped by quite different considerations? One of the main reasons that the Soviet Union began to take a naval interest in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean was its possible vulnerability to strikes from
submarine-based Polaris missiles fired by US submarines operating in the area. Yet it is uncertain whether US missile-carrying submarines were ever deployed in the Arabian Sea on a regular basis and Soviet efforts to track them were hardly a plausible threat to vital US security interests. Moreover the introduction of longer-range Poseidon and Trident missiles has reduced the strategic value of the Arabian Sea, since targets in the Soviet Union can be hit from a wider range of alternative locations. Indeed by such strategic criteria, US and Western interests in and around the Horn may actually have been declining at the end of the 1970s. The conclusion is reinforced by the US decision to close the Kagnew communications base in Ethiopia and to concentrate its most sensitive strategic facilities offshore at Diego Garcia.

The other major Western strategic interest is in oil and in the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) through which oil is shipped around the Horn into the Red Sea or past it down the East African coast and around the Cape. This is at first sight a more promising line of argument. The two 'oil shocks' of the 1970s not only produced massive increases in oil rents and in the petro-funds that could be spent on weapons. They also resulted in major increases in the rental value of oil-bearing land and of the oceans and non-oil bearing territory surrounding it. Thus the Horn acquired a value both as a site for installations protecting the Western economic stake in Arabia and the Gulf, and for Soviet interdiction of energy supplies along the West's 'jugular vein'. The ensuing revaluation of geo-strategic real estate could be observed not only in the massive increases in arms transfers but also in a series of major revisions in US and Western strategic doctrine, of which the most critical was the Carter Doctrine enunciated in January 1980 under which:

... any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.

This prepared the ground for the official establishment in March 1980 of what was at the times called the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, following an extended debate in the National Security Council during 1978-79 in the course of which the ‘arc of crisis’ thesis became incorporated in US security policy and negotiations with the Soviet Union on the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean were dropped. The aim of US policy became the establishment of a new regional security framework in which US strategic superiority would be reasserted. ‘At one point in that debate’ says Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter’s National Security Adviser, in his Memoirs:

Schlesinger argued forcefully that American military presence in the Indian Ocean — Persian Gulf area should ‘balance’ the Soviets, and when Vance and Carter reacted negatively, I not only backed Schlesinger but stated that in fact our objective ought to be military preponderance, since the area was vital to the United States while not of equal significance to the Soviets.

Within this regional security framework the Horn was of less value than the central oil-bearing lands of Arabia and the Gulf, hence the relatively limited scale of the United States’ military investment, even after the signature of defence agreements with Sudan, Somalia and Kenya in 1980. Indeed one of the Horn’s main values seems to have been as a terrain in which the presence of a Soviet ‘threat’ could be demonstrated. For Ethiopia and the Yemen are the only countries near the Gulf and the oil routes where Soviet and Cuban troops are
deployed in any quantity. It does not matter that this situation partly resulted from the previous marginality of the Horn in Western security concerns, nor that the scale of the Soviet presence and of its arms transfers look much less impressive in comparison with the military build-up in the remainder of the arc of crisis. What counts is the fact that Soviet and Cuban tanks, aircraft and military advisers are visibly there and committed to a military conflict in the Ogaden and Eritrea.

This is the proper perspective within which to evaluate Brzezinski’s celebrated aphorism that ‘SALT’ lies buried in the sands of the Ogaden. For in his Memoirs he identifies the Soviet airlift to the Ogaden — and the failure of the National Security Council to agree to the despatch of a US carrier group to the Indian Ocean to demonstrate American resolve — as the crucial turning point in the deterioration of US-Soviet relations. This is an almost classic case of history rewritten from hindsight. For as we shall shortly argue, the Soviet Union’s military investments in the Horn were made in a situation over which it exercised relatively limited control. Had it succeeded in its 1977 efforts to secure a peaceful settlement of the conflict through a confederal arrangement between Ethiopia, Somalia and the Yemen, the situation might conceivably have been more dangerous for the United States. As it turned out, the Soviet Union was (and still is) trapped in a costly conflict, being in no position to threaten Western supply lines even if it wanted to do so.

The truth is that the strategic arguments for a Western military presence to protect oil supplies and SLOCs around the Horn are far from convincing. The most critical ‘choke point’ is the Straits of Hormuz at the entry to the Persian Gulf, rather than the Straits of Bab el Mandab and the Red Sea. The main threat to shipping is not the Soviet Union, which is all too aware that an attack could precipitate a global confrontation. Rather it is from the local states which the West itself has helped to arm so heavily, as the current escalation of the Iran-Iraq war into the Gulf so clearly illustrates. Moreover as the same events equally demonstrate, it is most doubtful whether the deployment of military power, however massive, is sufficient to protect oil supplies, even when the two superpowers are in apparent agreement.

As late as 1979, indeed, a major US Congressional study of military installations concluded that: ‘the United States has few essential security interests in Africa South of the Sahara, except the shipment of Persian Gulf oil through the Indian Ocean and access to strategic minerals in southern Africa. And even in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean, it argued,

the salient feature ... seems to be the relatively small direct utility of military bases and facilities to US objectives, but the large indirect significance of the broader military relationship, including bases and facilities, a naval presence and extensive foreign military sales, training and technical assistance, to US goals. For the immediate future, the symbolic aspects of the US presence seem more important than the actual military capabilities which the US possesses in the region. The true locus of US power — which can if necessary be brought to bear in the region — lies at some distance, principally at Guam and Subic Bay.

If the powers’ military deployments in the area provide security for anything at all, it is their constantly shifting alliances with local ruling classes, as emerges clearly from the justifications for US security assistance programmes cited earlier and from the use of arms supplies, naval visits and joint military manoeuvres to provide theatrical demonstrations of protection. Nevertheless
regional clients cannot but be sceptical about the value of such assurances in the light of the US's previous inability or unwillingness to come to the rescue of Haile Selassie and the Shah of Iran. The leverage the powers can exercise is correspondingly limited. These constraints are illustrated by the recent visits of Chester Crocker, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, and of President Moi of Kenya to the Sudan, in a desperate attempt to persuade President Numeiry to postpone his fundamentalist Islamic reforms and reach an accommodation with the South. For the escalation of armed conflict in that area will almost certainly bring further requests for arms and military assistance. To provide them would mean further US involvement in a counter-insurgency Sudan cannot win. To refuse them would be to risk the downfall of Numeiry and the collapse of the West's carefully constructed 'regional security framework'.

So if the strategic arguments are not conclusive and regional alliances unstable what interests really are at stake in the Horn? Here we call attention to the ideological status of strategies and of the weapons and military deployments which are the material form of such strategies. Concepts such as the 'arc of crisis', the Soviet 'thrust' into Africa, the Carter Doctrine (protection of oil supplies), the Haig Doctrine (protection of strategic minerals) and the Pentagon's current concern with 'resource-rich regions of instability' are developed for domestic consumption in the West. They represent a particular way of managing the politics of recession: by displacing the blame onto the oil shocks and 'turbulence' in the Third World. At the same time these arguments legitimise the sectoral interests of the military-industrial complex itself, not only in arms transfers but also in the creation of intervention (or rapid deployment) forces. Such forces have been established not only by the US, but also on a more modest scale by Britain and France. USCENTCOM can call on five-and-a-half out of the US military establishment's active service army and marine corps divisions, three of its 12 naval carrier battle groups (one permanently based in the Arabia sea), seven of its 25 tactical fighter wings, two strategic bomber squadrons and five maritime patrol air squadrons, as well as an appendage of airlift forces, sealift forces, pre-positioning ships and rapidly deployable C3I (command, control, communications and intelligence) facilities. Regional insecurity and the Soviet threat have provided these forces with a 'mission' legitimising their expansion into a vast apparatus that bears little resemblance to the lightly equipped rapid strike forces originally planned during the Carter administration. Military procurement has been boosted by a series of major new equipment orders. The rapid deployment force and its support services account for a significant share of the huge increases in military spending which have taken place under the Reagan administration.

We do not wish to argue that such military-industrial pressures are the only reason for the US presence in the arc of crisis. But they create much of the thrust behind the Western powers' present military expansion, sustaining (through arms sales) the regional cycles with which the hegemonic cycle of imperialism has come into collision. At the same time preparation for nuclear war is being globalised. The new US strategic concept of 'Air Land Battle' — which its emphasis on mobile forces, 'deep strikes' into enemy territory and the integration of nuclear and conventional war — is disturbingly close to the doctrines associated with the rapid deployment force. The imminent large-scale deployment of short and intermediate range sea-launched cruise missiles by the major powers will almost certainly extend the frontiers of the nuclear arms race.
still further into the Third World, contributing once again to the valorisation of strategic territory around the Arabian Sea.

The Soviet and Cuban Connections
Even if the 'Soviet threat' is a figment of strategic ideology, the military presence of the Soviet Union and Cuba in the Horn is real enough. Moreover, in supporting the efforts of the Ethiopian government to crush the national movements by military means it perpetuates the militarisation of the region, with all the consequences we have described.

We believe that it is quite inadequate to accept the usual litany of excuses for Soviet and Cuban military aid. Nevertheless our interpretation of the Soviet Union's role differs substantially from that advanced by Petras and Morley in ROAPE No.30. Although Soviet and Cuban support for the revolution and Ethiopian socialism are not an adequate explanation for the alliance with the Dergue, they cannot be ignored as Petras and Morley seem to suggest. Moreover we consider that the Soviet Union's military activities in the Horn (and elsewhere in the Third World) pose genuine problems for socialist analysis — even when considered in the broader context of Western imperialism. That it has been provided in the spirit of proletarian internationalism; that it has been given on the request of an independent government; that it has supported one of the cardinal principles of the OAU, the territorial integrity of African states; and that the Eritrean and other nationalistic movements, whatever their ideological pretensions, have 'objectively' aligned themselves with the West and the conservative Arab states by opposing the Ethiopian revolution. These contentions each contain some truth. Yet one can equally well argue that 'objectively' Soviet military aid has blocked revolution in Eritrea and given the West a pretext for its own military activities in the Horn. Moreover the arguments do not add up to a convincing explanation for the Soviet Union's and Cuba's military support of first the Somali then the Ethiopian state.

The Soviet Union's assistance for Somalia dates back to 1963 when it negotiated a military aid package for hardware worth approximately $30 million, a team of 300 Soviet military advisers and military training for Somali officers and men in the USSR. A military agreement between the Soviet Union and Kenya followed shortly, in 1965, but was aborted by a dispute (encouraged by Western diplomats) between President Kenyatta and the left-wing faction in the government led by Oginga Odinga, at the very moment that a consignment of troop carriers and T-34 tanks were being unloaded at Mombasa. Somalia was the first African country with which the Soviet Union had established relations on a predominantly military basis (civilian aid was also to follow). Neither Somalia nor Kenya were ruled by progressive regime which in any sense compared with those of Ghana, Guinea and Mali. Thus the Soviet relationship with the Horn was dominated from the start by the standard concerns of international power politics. The military aid agreement with Somalia preceded and arguably anticipated the establishment by the USSR of a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Regular visits to the Indian Ocean commenced in 1968, five years after the Soviet navy had begun to appear regularly in the Mediterranean.

However, two major political events — the consolidation of a left-wing regime in the PDRY and the Somali coup of 1969 — enabled the Soviet Union to justify its military presence in the ideologically more acceptable form of support for two
FOREIGN POWERS AND MILITARISM

states of socialist orientation. (A third leftwards political transition in the same year, the coup by Numeiry and the free officers in the Sudan, did not create the basis for a long term alliance, the Soviet Union instead discrediting itself with him by supporting a coup attempt in 1971).

Though the Somali coup almost certainly was not organised by the USSR — contrary to the hint of Laitin and Samatar in ROAPE 30, it was conveniently timed, after the civilian government had started shifting towards the West. Soviet military advisers almost certainly had advance warning. Once installed the military government shifted to the Left, soon claiming that it adhered to a policy of scientific socialism. The reasons for the shift are complex and include the training of much of the officer corps in the Soviet Union, the soldiers' social marginality relative to the remainder of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the widely shared perception that capitalist development was inappropriate for a country with such limited resources.

For its part, the Soviet Union lost no time in recognising the regime (before any of the Western powers) and in consolidating its ties with it. There was a flurry of diplomatic and military contacts. The Soviet Union agreed to increase its military aid and extend the airfield and harbour at the port of Berbera, in exchange for the use of these facilities for its warships and reconnaissance aircraft. The arrangements were formalised (in spite of initial Somali reservations about the effect on their relations with Arab neighbours) in a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1974. By then the number of Soviet military technicians had risen to around 2,000 (in comparison to Somalia's own armed forces of 13,500 men). Some 2,000 Somali officers and men were trained in the USSR and Eastern Europe between 1963 and 1977. There were large increases in arms deliveries. Still more important is the fact that these deliveries were considerably more than Ethiopia was then receiving from the USA. For the first time Somalia's total military consumption (ie: its domestic military spending plus arms imports: see figures in ROAPE 30) rose above that of Ethiopia. This change in the military balance coincided almost exactly with the Ethiopian revolution.

However, it was three years before the profound changes in the regional correlation of forces introduced by the Ethiopian revolution worked themselves out. For Somalia, the apparent disintegration of the Ethiopian state made a Greater Somalia seem a practical possibility, the more so because of its temporary military advantage. These were probably the most decisive considerations behind the decision in July 1977 to commit its own troops to an invasion of the Ogaden alongside the Western Somalia Liberation Front, which had already greatly expanded its own military operations. However, the timing of the invasion was influenced by the Soviet Union's decision to establish a military relationship with Ethiopia, which had if possible to be pre-empted. It also followed efforts by neighbouring Arab countries to detach Somalia from the Soviet alliance and statements by the US administration that it would consider providing Somalia with weapons 'for defensive purposes' in the event of conflict with Ethiopia (though we doubt if these hints can have been as decisive a factor in Somalia's calculations as others have suggested, for firm promises were not made and dealings with the Western powers in the past could hardly have encouraged Somalia to rely upon them).

As for the Soviet Union, it moved cautiously at first, taking its time to establish,
in the words of one of the USSR's leading commentators on Third World affairs that:

the Ethiopian revolution is a graphic practical corroboration of the Marxist-Leninist theoretical proposition of the national-democratic state, the national-democratic stage of the revolution ranging beyond the limits of classical bourgeois revolutions ... (and) that, given correct guidance, this revolution opens the way towards non-capitalist development. (Ulyanovsky, 1978).

There was not yet any talk of Ethiopia becoming a 'state of socialist orientation'. However, during 1975 Ethiopian officers and men, including members of the Dergue itself, were being sent on training courses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Neither the USSR nor the Dergue were ready to proceed further, however, until mid-1976 when negotiations commenced for a major $385 million arms agreement, concluded in December 1976. These negotiations coincided with the disagreements between the Dergue and the US over the latter's military assistance programme referred to earlier.

But the realignment was not complete until the power struggles inside the Dergue had been decisively resolved in favour of Lt. Colonel Mengistu in February 1977, establishing a clear line of revolutionary command with which the USSR and Cuba comfortably deal. (The importance of this factor in their calculations is underlined by Valdes Vivo’s rewriting of history around Mengistu’s role as ‘Leader of the Revolution’, in which he is explicitly compared with Fidel Castro). This was followed in short order by Fidel Castro's visit to the Horn (in March), the expulsion of the US mission (in April) and Mengistu’s visit to the Soviet Union (in May) to request an increase in the delivery of weapons.

There were already small teams of Soviet and Cuban advisers in Ethiopia when the Somali invasion began in July. However, they did not at this stage take a direct part in the fighting. It was the hard-pressed Ethiopian forces themselves which brought the Somali offensive to a halt in front of the town of Harar by the end of October, leaving Somalia in control of most of the Ogaden.

The situation was dramatically altered by Somalia’s expulsion of the Soviet Union and Cuba in November, when it reappropriated all the military facilities granted to the USSR and abrogated the 1974 Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation. In the aftermath of this rupture, Soviet arms deliveries to Ethiopia were accelerated. At the same time it had become clear that the Ethiopian armed forces were having difficulty making use of the large quantities of equipment they had already received. Over the longer run training and technical assistance from Soviet and Cuban military advisers might make up this deficiency. But in the short-run a war had to be fought. In the closing days of December 1977 there took place a large-scale airlift of some 16,000 Cuban troops from Havana, Angola and Cuba, as well as some 2,000 Yemeni soldiers from the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). These reinforcements were deployed in January and by March the joint Ethiopian-Cuban counter-offensive had driven Somalia's armed forces from the country. Within a few weeks Soviet advisers were helping the Dergue plan its 1978-79 offensives in Eritrea.

We have outlined this sequence of events because it established that the Soviet Union was already consolidating the military aspects of its alliance with Dergue well before the Ogaden war. Here once again we differ from Petras and Morley who apparently regard the Soviet Union's commitment to Ethiopia as entirely
the consequence of Somalia’s reversal of alliances in late 1977, under US and Saudi pressure. The latter was a factor, but only one in a more complex chain of events. Inevitably this would require a reassessment of relations with Somalia. And ultimately it would commit it to the conflict in Eritrea from which the Americans were hypocritically trying to extricate themselves. The purpose of Fidel Castro’s visit in March 1977 was to establish the basis for a political solution — including negotiations between Ethiopia and the Eritrean movements and some kind of confederal arrangement between the states of socialist orientation in the region (Somalia, the PDRY, Ethiopia and perhaps Eritrea) — that would head off the confrontation and keep all the protagonists within the socialist community. The bottom line, however, was that the Soviet Union was now prepared to use its weapons and military power to ensure the survival of the Ethiopian revolutionary state.

To be sure, Somalia’s hope that it might be able to pre-empt the Soviet Union’s arming of Ethiopia was only one factor, perhaps not the most important, in its decision to advance into the Ogaden. And the USSR probably did not expect, even then, that Somalia would make the break total, as it did in November 1977. Once this was done, however the way was cleared to bring in the Cuban expeditionary force. The reversal in alliances also meant that the Soviet Union believed it had no alternative but to join battle in Eritrea once the war in the Ogaden was over whatever reservations it (and still more, Cuba) may have had about Mengistu’s claim at a mass rally in Havana in April 1978 that these groups in the administrative region of Eritrea are agents of imperialism and Arab reaction and are trying to turn Eritrea into a base and fortress of these reactionary forces with the aim of strangling the people’s revolution.

The Cubans — under pressure from radical Arab governments and the Palestine Liberation Organisation — made several attempts to persuade the Ethiopian government to negotiate and made a point of not participating directly in the fighting. But in the final analysis they were almost as deeply committed as were the Russians. Their troops stayed on, not just to guard the Ogaden but also to train the People’s Militia and to service military equipment.

We have already described how in the process Ethiopia became the point of accumulation for major quantities of Soviet military hardware. Equally important for the war effort was the training of Ethiopian personnel. This took place on a fairly modest scale in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, to which some 2,100 Ethiopian officers and men were despatched between 1973 and 1981; and on a very large scale by instructors from the USSR (for the army, navy and airforce), Cuba (for the army and People’s Militia), and East Germany (for the security services and People’s Protection Brigades), posted in Ethiopia itself. Furthermore, senior Soviet and Cuban military advisers (including four Soviet and at least one Cuban general) participated directly in the planning of the Ethiopian counter-offensive in the Ogaden and in the major Eritrean campaigns. Soviet and Cuban officers belonged to the Supreme Military Strategic Committee — a body whose Eritrean members overlapped with the National Revolutionary Operation Command set up by the Dergue in December 1977 to plan its war operations. The importance attached to these assignments can be gauged from the fact that the most senior Soviet officer, General Petrov, was a first deputy commander-in-chief of Soviet ground forces, going on to become commander of the new Far East command in 1979 and (in December 1980) commander-in-chief of the USSR’s own ground forces.
Some of the time the Soviet Union and Cuba may have acted in good faith, to preserve what they saw as the gains of the Ethiopian Revolution, as during Fidel Castro's attempt to mediate in March 1977. Some of the time they were quite simply in error, as in their underestimation of Somali nationalism. Some of the time their hand was forced by regional developments over which they could exercise limited control, as arguably when they were drawn into the conflict in Eritrea. Nevertheless there remain several actions which cannot be adequately accounted for in these ways: the USSR's decision to train and equip Somalia's armed forces in 1963; the consolidation of military relationships with Siad Barre's military regime between 1969-74; the decision to displace the US as Ethiopia's main arms supplier in 1976-77; and that to make use of the military resources provided to Ethiopia during the Ogaden war for the offensives on the national movements in Eritrea.

Was the USSR acting like any other major power, in defence of its global interests as defined by those who (under conditions of actually existing socialist) control the Soviet state (as Lyons argues in ROAPE 12)? Economic interests certainly exist, notably in the Soviet commercial shipping fleet's access to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, but were probably not a major factor in Soviet calculations. On the other hand there is no lack of strategic explanations for Soviet interest in the Horn. Some observers have argued that the critical factor was the development by the Soviet Union of a 'blue water' navy capable of preventing a repetition of the humiliation suffered during the Cuban missile crisis (which one may term the 'Gorshkov factor' after the admiral who played such a crucial role in restructuring the USSR's fleet and its naval doctrines). Others assert that more specific strategic interests were at stake, in particular the need to cope with the West's naval presence in the Indian Ocean, its establishment of the Diego Garcia base and the possible deployment of US nuclear-armed submarines. Some have argued (see in particular Payton) that the USSR was concerned about the vulnerability of its own sea lines of communication to Asia, especially after the Sino-Soviet conflict had cut off alternative direct land routes. Others view Soviet policy mainly in terms of the broader international correlation of forces in the Middle East and Gulf analysed earlier — thus Petras & Morley in ROAPE 30 regard the shift into the Horn as somewhat inadequate compensation for the collapse of the Soviet Union's strategic alliances in Egypt and the Sudan. Others again have analysed it in terms of the emergence of the USSR as a truly global power, with an ability to project a peacetime military presence in the Third World — demonstrated by its naval visits to the Indian Ocean and its ability to airlift troops and equipment to Angola and Ethiopia. Few serious strategic analysts would maintain on the other hand that the USSR has developed or even intends to develop an offensive capability in the region, such that it could interdict Western oil supplies or military installations.

We do not have space to discuss the individual merits of these different arguments. Together or in combination they may well suffice to explain the USSR's development of an Indian Ocean strategy, centred around the facilities it obtained in exchange for arms and military support in the Horn and the Arabian peninsula. However, it should be stressed that these facilities are limited in comparison with those possessed by the Western powers in the region. Since being ejected from Berbera the Soviet Union has been careful not to become too dependent upon local bases, for example installing moveable equipment on the Red Sea island of Dahlak, rather than building up the mainland ports of Assab.
and Massawa. At most such facilities reduce the cost of Soviet peacetime deployment in the Indian Ocean. They are not vital strategic assets to be held on to at any price.

Strategic interests do not, moreover, explain the most momentous Soviet decisions of all, to arm Ethiopia and participate in the Ogaden and Eritrean wars. The military facilities obtained in Ethiopia are (to say the least) no improvement on those lost in Somalia. Ethiopia is a larger country and perhaps a more influential ally in Africa. The decision to help it preserve its territorial integrity from secession and outside attack could be defended at the OAU. It may even have won the Soviet Union some diplomatic credit. It is conceivable that the Soviet Union took a calculated risk that it could consolidate an alliance with Ethiopia — perhaps even bring into being the confederal alliance among states of socialist orientation promoted by Fidel Castro in 1977 — without provoking Somalia with an open breach. But if these were indeed the Soviet Union’s calculations, they were inaccurate, not just about Somalia’s reactions, but also about the prospect of bringing the war in Eritrea to a conclusion by pumping in weapons and carrying through a conventional military campaign of the kind that drove Somalia’s army out of the Ogaden. The 1977-78 air and sea lift demonstrated that the Soviet Union and Cuba were capable of using force in the Third World to protect their allies. But before long their forces became immobilised in a war that could not be won in Eritrea. At the same time the US was given a pretext for breaking off the Indian Ocean naval arms limitation talks (NALT) and for building up its own far more extensive rapid ploy forces. Thus although it established an extremely visible presence in the Horn, the Soviet Union may well have ended up in a weaker overall strategic position.

If the strategic gains proved (not for the first time) elusive, why was there such a concentration of Soviet and Cuban military activities in the Horn? And why was military aid given such priority over all other forms of assistance? As can be seen in Table IV, arms were more than 90 per cent of gross Soviet exports and aid to Ethiopia between 1976 and 1980 and two-thirds of all its corresponding transactions with Somalia in the same period (though the latter was dramatically affected by the cut-off which occurred in 1977). This compares with the still high proportion (65 per cent) of arms flow to the African continent as a whole. In the process Eritrea and the Ogaden became the largest graveyard for Soviet weapons outside Afghanistan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arm Exports</th>
<th>Commercial Exports</th>
<th>Gross Aid Disbursed</th>
<th>Arms as a Per Cent of Total Exports and Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>11,320</td>
<td>5,579</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>65%</td>
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**Note 1:** 1975-79.


So can we conclude that the Horn had simply become a terrain for the valorisation of the USSR’s arms output and the perfection of its rapid
deployment and counter-insurgency operations, much as we have argued was the case for the Western powers?

A major difference is that arms manufacturers in the USSR and Eastern Europe are not obliged to earn profits — and hence are not constrained to seek external markets or to lobby the government to increase procurement. The socialist arms industries do not face the same realisation problem as their capitalist counterparts. But we do know that a growing proportion of the USSR’s production of conventional armaments — a third to a half of the output of tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery pieces, slightly less than a half of the combat aircraft, around a quarter of the helicopter and around half the surface naval craft are exported. In addition to these there are the weapons absorbed by the USSR’s own navy and its military deployments in the Third World.

The process of armament has become internalised within the structures of state socialism — such that the military threat from the Western powers (though real) cannot by itself explain the production and export of weapons by the USSR and its corresponding exercise of global military power. It is not necessary to argue that the Soviet Union has a military-industrial complex, nor even that it is one (Holloway, 1983). Rather it is the Soviet state and social formation that are reproduced both nationally and internationally through the control of organised force. This is institutionalised in the commandist structure of the Communist Party and the way it exercises power through the interlocking hierarchies of the Party and state bureaucracies, the security services, the armed forces and the planning mechanism. It is also built into the collectivist mode of production, with central planning tending to privilege the military sector and to sustain an arms economy.

Having been built into the planning mechanism, the priority of the military sector has become to a certain extent self-reinforcing. The Soviet economy as a whole functions under conditions of aggregate excess demand. In consequence there is constant pressure to increase imports, especially of food and of technology. Such pressure has been increased by the shift from extensive growth based on large scale investment to intensive growth based on technical change and (in theory) the more efficient use of resources. However, in most sectors supply bottlenecks and excess demand for the final product means there is little incentive to export. The military sector is the only one in which such supply constraints do not seem to operate. Indeed, the reverse, for it is likely that excess capacity is deliberately maintained in order to guarantee increases in military output in time of international crisis. Furthermore, the resources devoted to military R&D are enormous. Hence the performance of the USSR’s weapons compares favourably with that of those produced by the West, ensuring that they are relatively easy to market. To be sure the military sector is a major burden on the Soviet economy. But this does not affect our argument, which is that the arms industries are the only ones to remain internationally competitive and free of supply constraints in a command economy in which the state has already accorded priority to the military sector.

It is well known that the USSR and its CMEA partners have gradually restructured relations with the global economy. In the process they have all but abandoned the previous theory of ‘two world economies’ in which the professed goal was the replacement of capitalist exploitation of the Third World by planned long-term exchanges between the latter and the socialist countries. Foreign trade
has been rationalised as a dynamic component of the Soviet Union's economy, rather than on the previous basis of the barter of residuals. And the socialist countries have moved away from long-term barter agreements with their Third World partners toward a variety of more flexible arrangements in which emphasis has been placed on open-ended 'framework agreements', joint enterprises and settlement in hard currency at world prices. The application of such principles, in an economy which possesses a comparative advantage in the military sector and in little else besides energy, has had one major unanticipated consequence: the reinforcement of the USSR's tendency to define its relations with the Third World in military terms.

Despite the presumption of powerful commercial incentives to sell arms in the Third World, in order to pay for imports of grain and technology, it is extremely difficult to estimate Soviet arms transfers and still more the hard currency earnings from them. It is generally accepted that arms exports have increased greatly, almost the only sector of trade in which they match the US. Moreover, a larger proportion are believed to have been sold on commercial terms since the mid-1970s than in the past. Nevertheless it is unlikely that the proceeds could exceed 10 to 15 per cent of the USSR’s foreign earnings. These proceeds may partly account for the Soviet Union's interest in selling weapons. But they certainly do not explain why arms should have become the major instrument of Soviet relations with the Third World. Nor are such commercial considerations relevant in the case of Somalia and Ethiopia, neither of whom could earn enough from the international economy to cover the cost of more than a small fraction of the weapons they have acquired from the Soviet Union.

The comparative advantage the military sector enjoys in the Soviet economy is important for another reason: it increases the attractiveness of arms as an instrument of policy. The opportunity costs of supplying arms are less than those of all other forms of trade and assistance. Moreover, the Soviet Union's weapons — unlike its aid and its commercial weapons — are competitive in performance, price and speed of delivery. In much the same manner as the USSR’s nuclear arsenal has been used to establish parity with the USA in the arms race, its conventional armory has been used to consolidate its superpower position in the Third World. Arms transfers are only one instrument of this policy, for they have been co-ordinated with the USSR's naval strategy, referred to earlier, and the build-up of its Third World intervention forces, whose capabilities were tested out in the Ogaden and Eritrean wars.

Here we can return to our arguments concerning the Horn as a terrain for the valorisation of the weapons and strategies of the world powers. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned there is no problem of assuring the profitability of the arms industries. Nor is there much prospect of making money from arms sales to the Horn. Instead it is the power of the Soviet state and its ability to reproduce itself internationally through arms transfers and military diplomacy which have been put to the test.

But to leave the argument at this point would not be fair to the Soviet Union and Cuba. Nor would it be adequate history. Some Soviet actions, like the initial decision to arm and equip Somalia’s army in 1963, can be explained mainly in terms of strategies and military interest. But others, like the crucial turn-around in regional alliances in 1977, clearly resulted from more complex considerations.
Insofar as the goals of Soviet and Cuban policy are ever publicly discussed, it is within the ideological discourse of official Marxism-Leninism. Of course we will never know the real reason that one course of action rather than another was followed. But this discourse situates policies in reference to a particular view of the transition to socialism in the Third World. Over the period in question (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s) this view was itself altering. There took place a gradual retreat from the optimistic assumptions of the Kruschev era: that the national bourgeoisie could play a progressive role; that as the contradictions of colonial capitalism worked themselves out, a broad-based alliance of progressive forces would emerge in support of a national-democratic revolution and a policy of non-capitalist development; and that this could in the right circumstances open up the way towards a transition to socialism. Following some of the earlier failures of Soviet policy in the Third World — in Ghana, Indonesia, Egypt etc. — this was replaced by a rather more sceptical analysis both of the difficulties of implementing socialism and concerning the ease with which progressive regimes could be co-opted, or be destabilised by the Western powers. Attention was concentrated instead on a limited number of 'states of socialist orientation', where there was some prospect of implementing a more orthodox Marxist-Leninist world of transformation. The difference between the two views may have been overstated — both for example assume that the stage of capitalist development can be by-passed — and their terminology is often inconsistent. For our purposes the crucial difference is the insistence in the more recent discussions on a strong organisational base for the revolutionary state in a vanguard party and revolutionary armed forces and on closer ties with fraternal socialist countries.

Equally interesting, but less often discussed, was a sophisticated analysis of Third World military establishments in which their revolutionary potential is recognised. This emerges both in the writings of the Soviet military establishment's own strategic thinkers (usefully summarised by Katz) and in some of the more recent output of the USSR Academy of Sciences' regional institutes. A recent study of Society and State in Tropical Africa by a team from the African Institute distinguishes between three situations in which the military establishment can play a progressive role. First, as the auxiliary of a 'revolutionary-democratic' post-independence party as in Tanzania, Guinea and Ghana. Second, in the case of military establishments which have emerged in the course of protracted armed struggle, as in Mozambique and Angola, where the basis is laid for a relationship between army and society that resembles 'that which usually exists in socialist countries'. Third, as a consequent of 'the advent to power of a progressive military group as a result of revolutionary violence', as, for example in Ethiopia, Benin and the Congo. In the latter case the situation is complex because

the national armed forces constitute not a revolutionary 'party' army, but one created under the previous overthrown regime ... Studies are yet to appear that shed light on how revolutionary ideology arises in the officers' ranks a professional corporative milieu well removed, in formal terms, from the popular needs ...

Whereas the 'national revolutionary' nature of the military in most liberated countries is logical and law-governed, their devotion to social revolution is selective and conditioned. Nevertheless people have emerged (sometimes even those who lead armies) who managed to step over the traditional threshold of purely nationalist, petty-bourgeois army-corporative convictions and have become convinced of the need to reform society on socialist principles.
Nevertheless the advance toward socialist orientation can only be achieved if the revolutionary military group can create:

a well organised efficient vanguard party in the activities of which the lowest strata of society are involved and which is guided by the principles of scientific socialism. Controlled and educated by a vanguard party, popular armed forces in countries with socialist orientation will then inevitably become an important instrument in the struggle for a new society and in the defence of revolutionary gains.

Moreover, the creation of vanguard parties is something that the Soviet Union and Cuba have been actively prepared to promote. In Somalia such a party, the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) was established amid great fanfare in 1976. In reality, however, it has operated much like one of the patronage parties of the 1960s and its establishment did nothing to prevent the rupture with the Soviet Union. In Ethiopia, the theory that a vanguard army could in some circumstances stand in for a vanguard party was taken seriously, at least by the Cubans (Vivo). But it was not regarded as a satisfactory foundation for socialism over the longer run and the Soviet Union and Cuba have continually pressed for the establishment of a vanguard party that (unlike COPWE) would have a solid organisational base separate from the armed forces.

However, it has proved more difficult for official Marxism-Leninism to come up with a satisfactory line on a third major issue, that of nationalities (though we shall not go into the complexities of this debate since these were covered in ROAPE 30 as well as by Lyons in ROAPE 12 and Halliday and Molyneux). National liberation from colonial rule was a cardinal principle of Soviet policy in Africa. Self-determination in the context of the post-colonial state system was not.

The USSR’s position, that it was in favour of self-determination only when pursued by peaceful means, was ambiguous enough to allow it to claim to support Somalia’s aspirations and yet to crush them comprehensively in the Ogaden war. Its miscalculations of Somalia’s behaviour in 1977 and its underestimation of the national movements in Eritrea nevertheless do not suggest it has much real understanding of the problem. If it was consistent about anything, it was about state power and its alliance with those possessing it. Support for the territorial integrity of African states was a useful way of acquiring legitimacy in the OAU. But it had little to do with social transformation in the continent. This was made starkly clear when the socialist countries came to make their choice between the state socialism of the Ethiopian revolutionary government and the revolutionary socialism of the Eritrean and other national liberation movements.

It is arguable that Cuba paid more serious attention to such ideological concerns than the Soviet Union. Moreover, it continued to be troubled by the contradictions between its role in the Horn and its credibility in the non-aligned movement, to which it attached some importance. In spite of having many troops on the ground in Ethiopia, it had few vested military interests at stake: being neither a major arms supplier nor having strategic interests of its own in the Horn and Indian Ocean. It has long-standing historical connections with the Eritrean liberation movements, whose guerillas it had first accepted for training in 1967. Cuba had supported self-determination by Eritrea until 1975 and did not begin to call the national movement ‘separatists’ until early 1977. Even then Castro continued to advocate ‘a peaceful and just solution, based on Leninist principles, to the national question’, but within the framework of the Ethiopian
REVOLUTIONARY STATE, which would 'safeguard as an inalienable right its unity, integrity and sovereignty' (quoted in Valdes, p.84). Fidel Castro made a number of attempts to promote a settlement between the Dergue and the Eritrean movements in response to representations made to him by the PLO and radical Arab governments. That he failed was in part due to Mengistu's intransigence in insisting that Eritrea was an 'internal' problem in which not even fraternal socialist allies could interfere. Castro resisted pressure from the Dergue and probably from the Soviet Union as well to commit Cuban troops directly to the war in Eritrea. Yet in the final analysis it may not have made any difference. The Cuban troops training the Ethiopian armed forces and Peoples' Militia and repairing their equipment were as much part of the Ethiopian war effort as the Soviet military advisers directing military operations in Eritrea itself.

It is not too difficult, in sum, to characterise Soviet and Cuban goals in the region in terms of the principles of official Marxism: namely support for states of socialist orientation, aid to vanguard parties and revolutionary armies, and, more questionably, the application of Marxist-Leninist nationality doctrines to the complex relations between states and nations in the Horn. But it is harder to decide whether the USSR's and Cuba's policies and actions would have been any different if they had not formulated them in terms of such principles. To start with, the doctrines themselves have been fluid. Both the theory of 'states of socialist orientation' and the recognition of the revolutionary potential of armies were shaped by developments in the Third World itself — and hence can be regarded as being as much the consequences of as the guiding principles behind relations with the Third World.

Furthermore there have been major inconsistencies in the way the doctrines have been put in practice, as we have already pointed out in the case of the nationalities issue. How, for example, could the Soviet Union classify Somalia as a 'state of socialist orientation', sign a treaty of friendship in 1974, welcome its establishment of a vanguard party in 1976 and then denounce it for 'social chauvinism' and selling out to the forces of reaction only a year or two later? True, it can be argued that it was the Somalia government which initiated the final break, thus demonstrating its true colours; that Ethiopia's revolution was more fundamental and therefore had to be supported when it came to a choice. But if so, how could the Soviet Union have been so badly wrong about Somalia's revolutionary potential? Or was the talk about a state of socialist orientation a charade all along? And why did Ethiopia have to be supported in its armed assault on the equally fundamental transformation in Eritrea?

But the most serious contradiction of all remains that between the goals of Soviet and Cuban policy and the almost exclusively military means used to pursue them. Garrison socialism in Ethiopia (and previously in Somalia), the accumulation of huge armouries by their local allies, the redirection of Ethiopia's revolutionary energies towards war, and destruction and famine over large areas of the Horn are almost all the socialist countries have to show for two decades of assistance. It cannot even be argued that they have made strategic gains. For as we have seen, the overall correlation of forces in the broad Arabian peninsular and Indian Ocean region to which the Horn is an adjunct has begun to tilt against the socialist countries, not least because they are tied down in costly war in Eritrea.

Let us conclude by returning to our argument in Part I that the present situation results from a collision between the hegemonic cycles of the new cold war and the
regional cycles of the states and social formulation of the Horn. It remains an open question how best to characterise the socialist countries' intervention in these cycles. Did the Soviet Union follow its own hegemonic momentum in moving into the Horn? Did it on the other hand respond defensively to the Western powers (eg: in acquiring military facilities from which to keep track of Western nuclear-armed submarines and naval deployments)? Did it react in an ad hoc manner to local developments, such as the new situation opened up by the Ethiopian revolution? Was it genuinely moved by a spirit of proletarian internationalism to support socialist governments whenever they emerged and to protect them from destabilisation? A case can be made for each one of these positions, though as we have seen, none by itself suffices to explain the behaviour of the Soviet Union and of its allies.

Our argument has been that even if Soviet policies can be accepted at face value, the fact that these policies were implemented almost entirely through military relations with African states has ensured that they became repressive and self-contradictory. It is perhaps because it is aware of these contradictions that Cuba has begun to withdraw its military contingent from Ethiopia (whilst doing its best to conceal the fact that it is doing so). The Soviet Union cannot pull out so easily. If it withdrew its military advisers and cut the flow of weapons, it would risk the collapse of the Ethiopian revolutionary regime and damage the credibility of its policies in the Third World, all the more so because these policies are everywhere constructed around military power. This is a classic case of social relations, those of the production and control of force, prevailing over ideology.

Bibliographic Note:
Debate over the roles of the powers in the Horn has been joined in a number of previous issues of ROAPE. See in particular Fred Halliday, "US Policy in the Horn of Africa: Aboulia or Proxy Intervention?" ROAPE No.10 (1977); Roy Lyons "The USSR, China and the Horn" ROAPE No.12 (1978) and James Petras and Morris Morley "The Ethiopian Military State and Soviet-US Involvement in the Horn of Africa" ROAPE No.30 (1984).


For obvious reasons there is a proliferation of cold war analysis of Soviet military interests in the Third World, but hardly any serious scrutiny by the left. However, the question of a Soviet military-industrial complex is discussed by Egbert Jahn, "The Role of the Armaments Complex in Soviet Society (Is There a Soviet Military-Industrial Complex?)" Journal of Peace Research Vol.13, No.3, 1975 and David Holloway, "War, Militarism and the Soviet State" in E.P.
The Colonial State in Northern Ghana: The Political Economy of Pacification

Nii-K Plange

The installation of the colonial capitalist economic system required the creation of certain socio-political structures to ensure the reorganisation of indigenous economies for accumulation. This precipitated the appearance and the gradual and sometimes violent extension of the colonial state into the hinterland of the colonies. The concept 'colonial state' is employed here to denote its characteristic difference from the state as it emerged in the context of European capitalism. The state in the colonies was imposed from above and supervised a captive population and economy, which together were 'protected' for expatriate metropolitan capitalism, and was largely responsible to the metropolitan state. The latter provided unusual limits to its operation.

Colonial capitalism was a 'bastard' form of capitalism as the state's presence was over-arching and also denied indigenous capitalist entrepreneurs from any substantial participation in the economy. It did this within Ghana through legislation which undercut local and favoured expatriate capital and allowed the latter considerable freedom of operation. The colonial state underwrote the process of expatriate capital accumulation by encouraging labour recruitment (many times forcefully) and the payment of low wages and by restricting labour unionisation. Agricultural producers were denied direct access to markets except through expatriate merchant houses which manipulated prices. Control of the colonial economy affected the process of class formation as the colonial state encouraged differential participation in the economy by various regions and communities among the colonised population.

Trade had existed between African communities and Europeans before colonisation. In this pattern of trade, relatively equal partners had exchanged their goods without the need for domination. Colonisation introduced the domination of one partner. European capital sought to wrest the control of trade and resources from the hands of local traders and reduce them to producers, wage earners or both. This would ensure a constant production of commodities for export which would not depend upon the goodwill of indigenous rulers.

The Colonial State and Pacification

'Pacification', as the colonialists described their conquests, was the process through which the weight and strength of the metropolitan state was brought to bear upon pre-capitalist economic and political institutions. The purpose was to
open up the country and lay bare its natural resources, including labour-power, to make them easily available for expatriate capital. This does not mean that the colonial state always served the instrumental needs of every single capitalist. It was responsible for the process of ‘rooting’ capitalism. In *Capital* Vol.1, Chapter 31, Marx describes the role of the state in such circumstances as ‘to hasten, hot-house fashion, the process of transformation (of the feudal mode of production) into the capitalist mode, and to shorten the transition’. The state — ‘the concentrated and organised force of society’ — was used to create and then attempt to maintain the structural conditions for the articulation of the capitalist mode of production with the pre-capitalist societies of the colonies. In the colonies, the initial activities of the state included changes in indigenous production, sometimes enforced through coercive action. The consequences of this, as Mamdani has observed, was that the ‘petty commodity producer became enslaved to metropolitan capital . . . ’ In other areas, commodity production was discouraged and able-bodied men were conscripted into wage-earning relations. Yet still in other cases an entrepreneurial class of traditional traders and trading networks was impaired and their positions taken over by expatriate commercial houses and firms.

The colonial state was also a paternalistic state which assumed that it knew what was good for the local population and diligently pursued it. Accordingly, the colonial state perceived itself as balancing the conflicting interests of the indigenous people and the metropolitan bourgeoisie not to mention its own interest in maintaining the colony. The relative autonomy of the colonial state was thus, always and consistently, as an arbiter between capitalist interests as they vied with each other for cheap resources and human labour power. This role involved a complex process of social engineering which was predicated on factors including: (i) the character of local economic and political institutions, (ii) the *particular* process of integration and the articulation of the indigenous economy with the capitalist system, (iii) the numbers of expatriate interests involved in search of profits in the colony, (iv) the need to find or create local collaborators, and (v) the concrete form of accumulation and the particular resources of the colony that dominated expatriate bourgeois economic interest. The diverse forms of capitalist accumulation in all colonies led to regional differences and provided the basis for the post-colonial politics of regionalism.

The general problems of manipulating conflicting interests compelled the colonial state to act to ensure the survival of the colony and the introduced economic system. Hence, administrative decisions did not offer immediate profit or access to profit-making to all expatriate capital interests. The colonial state could, thus, seem to be an organisation which was ‘distinct from economic enterprise owned by Europeans’, and at times its ‘intervention in creating the technical and social conditions for capitalist enterprise and other forms of production (could be) limited by its fiscal position’ as Wayne argues. However, to conclude from this, as Wayne did, that the state is then autonomous is erroneous. The activities and problems of the state even when it seemed to act in favour of the colonised, or even when it ‘drew back from assisting capital to increase production’, can be explained without denying the historical origins and partisan character of the colonial state. Wayne’s attempt at a liberal-democratic definition of the colonial state in non-economic terms, as a structure of administration which claims to ‘make no *a priori* assumptions about its relationship to capitalist and other economic enterprises’ is misguided. If we examine the (colonial) state ‘from the
standpoint of how...it arose in history and what were the principal stages in its
development...", we shall conclude, like Lenin did (in Selected Works Vol.3), that
the state is 'an organisation of the particular exploiting class for the maintenance
of its external conditions of production'. The concrete task of the state is
reducible neither to political nor to economic domination. It is a task of
maintaining the general conditions of accumulation.

The responsibilities of the colonial state (used interchangeably with its
administration) were clearly expressed by one colonial Governor in his
memorandum to the Colonial Office on the National Congress of British West
Africa in 1920. He stated that:

the development of the resources of a colony should be left...to private enterprise, which
would not be stimulated by government subsidies or any similar expenditure...the task of
the administration being to open up the country and render its wealth accessible by means of
public works (my emphasis).

The wealth includes, invariably, the human resources of society as cheap labour-
power.

In performing these duties, the colonial state had to extend and assert itself
against indigenous economic and political institutions. In this process it had
either to destroy or to restructure some of them. Beyond the initial violence and
the general show of force, the imposition of the Pax Britannica also involved a
response to and solution of certain important problems. These were, first, an
effective pattern of administration to enforce law and order; an administrative
apparatus to supervise the transformation of the economy to enhance the
production and exportation of resources; thirdly, an effective medium for
implementing colonial legislation insofar as it affected local constituencies. This
meant the utilisation of the forms of indigenous political institutions to articulate
colonial policy and to resolve internal conflicts resulting from policy
implementation. The colonial device that was used has been described by Arendt
as 'bureaucracy as a principle of domination'. One of its fundamental
characteristics was the 'administrator who ruled by reports', and a host of
professionals in various wings of the administration. The imposition of the Pax
represented a shift from 'war, trade and piracy', to investments and production
of profit. This required a more stable organisation to encourage, as Arendt put it,
'the domination of one people, not as before for the sake of its own riches, but for
the sake of another country's wealth'. But this was not a mere bureaucratic
organisation. It was an imperial bureaucracy with various regional and local
branches which derived their definitive norms of operation (though altered by
local realities) from the metropolitan source and were responsive, in the final
instance, to the demands of the metropole. In this sense the colonial state was not
an entity in itself but a sub-unit of a complex imperial organisation which
straddled a resource-world of colonies. In its various regional forms it was
responsible for creating and maintaining a politico-economic environment within
which expatriate economic interests and some others (including missionaries and
proper local interests) were protected and supervised, given or denied privileged
positions, directed and regulated by public policies. There were always some
areas of conflict between the administration and the varying expatriate interests.
However, when these conflicts reached crisis levels they were referred to, and
solved, in the metropolitan country.
The solutions to these complex managerial problems were attempted through the creation of institutions like the colonial service which recruited and trained the manpower for colonial administration. In the colonies, legislative and executive councils were created to represent and encourage British economic and political interests as well as to manipulate and contain local interests. As Brett describes it, 'the administrative backbone of Colonial control stretched from the Secretary of State in London through local Governor(s) . . . down to the village headman or chief via the Secretariat and the Provincial and District Administration'.

There was a rigid and respected hierarchy of offices with attendant security of tenure and remuneration for colonial civil servants. Colonial administration attempted to attain an efficiency of operation which would yield both economic, social and political profits for the British colonial political economy.

The Colonial State and Pacification in Ghana
Here we examine the process through which the northern region of Ghana was 'pacified'. In the course of this the differences between the administration of the north and other regions in Ghana will be pointed out. The differences, it will be argued, were not caused by a policy of 'neglect', 'isolation' or 'indifference' as Staniland and Kimble have argued. On the contrary they should be seen as the consequences of the colonial state's economic policy in Ghana which turned the region into a 'labour reserve' for the new colony.

Installation of the Colonial State; 1844 and after
To understand the pacification and extension of the colonial state and administration of the north it will be appropriate to situate it in the wider context of the colony as a whole. British jurisdiction of any sort was not implemented in Ghana until after 1844. Prior to this centuries of association and trading with European merchants had gradually introduced to the coastal areas, and the immediate hinterland, some European ideas and values of jurisdiction. During this period there was no attempt to colonise the various communities or bring them together into one nation. Threats to and discontent with the European presence and attempted economic monopoly had come largely from Ashanti as she, imperially, coerced and laid occasional siege to the defenceless Fanti and other communities. Ashanti southward imperialism was an attempt to reach the source of coastal trade and break the middleman role of the Fanti and other coastal groups as were similar movements northwards.

After the celebrated Bond of 1844, what seemed like formal British jurisdiction began to be enforced on the coast to the disgust and disdain of some local chiefs. This period saw a change in British relations with coastal communities from that of conciliation to threats, and the use of force to pacify recalcitrant local leaders. The administration slowly tried through deliberations and committees to assert itself but allowed local leaders the chance to express their views and feelings over controversial issues. However, whenever any such leader proved recalcitrant force was immediately applied. It was against this background that in 1854 the Governor of the Gold Coast arrogated to the colonial state the right to accept or reject elected chiefs of local communities.

The case of King Aggrey remains a good example of British policy. In 1865 the colonial administration welcomed the installation of King Aggrey of Cape Coast with the hope that he would prove a faithful ally. However, after Aggrey had
claimed and demonstrated the autonomy of traditional courts from British jurisdiction, the same administration reported 'symptoms of disaffection' on his part. He was banished from his motherland and throne in 1866. 'The outcome of (this) affair', Kimble comments, 'illustrates clearly how in the last resort it was impossible for British jurisdiction to co-exist with the unfettered authority of the chiefs.' Similar treatment awaited others. The Fanti Confederation of 1868-1873 mobilised among the Fanti chiefs in spite of their long standing loyalty to British authority. The confederation showed a strong sense of independence when in 1868 an exchange of forts, and thus areas of influence, was arranged between the British and the Dutch. Onward to Mankessim the Fanti chiefs trudged, gathered, and asserted their independence from the British. After a vain attempt at persuasion the governor was ready, as Kimble records, to 'make some salutary examples in order to crush out the spirit of disaffection so glaringly evident in the whole conduct of the people of Cape Coast'.

Another area of conflict and final British assertion concerned the attempt to introduce taxes. A poll-tax was to be levied and agreement to this was demanded from chiefs. To tie them, and therefore the institution of their office, to this scheme, a form of monthly stipend was to be paid to them upon the successful collection of the taxes. In addition, the administration promised to undertake a general development of the various municipalities. None of these promises were seen to have been carried out and by 1854, when the second payment was due, there was widespread resistance. The administration came down hard on the communities where resistance had been rampant, bombarding towns, burning villages and putting up a general show of force with regular troops. All this was done, as the governor put it, 'as a vindication of the insulted honour of the British Flag'.

Another crisis of power arose in the context of the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance. The intention of this ordinance was, as Kimble points out, to restructure the judicial authority of the chiefs, to 'substitute for it the central, impersonal machinery of British courts', and to extend control over the African population. A Native Affairs Department was created in 1902 as a consequence of this ordinance and in 1904 the Chiefs Ordinance usurped all the powers, juridical and others, of the traditional authorities and formally gave the governor the final decision in the depositions and appointments of chiefs. There was pervasive resistance from both chiefs and by now a sizeable, Western-educated African elite, but no unity of interest within the African population. The Western-educated Africans ran into conflicts with both local chiefs and the administration as they demanded their share of power, rights and privileged positions within the new economy. They opposed the chiefs on the basis of their 'progressive' attitude and they attacked the colonial administration for its usurpation of power and privilege which they claimed to be theirs. The chiefs on the other hand clung adamantly to their status and privileges against the threat of the colonial economy and of their educated kin. Over and above these two groups the colonial state pursued the expansion of its powers and the protection of the capitalist economy through the modification or destruction of pre-capitalist institutions and relations thereby unleashing a new process of class-formation.

The Western-educated community did not escape the aggression of the colonial state. Through intrigue, seduction, character assassination and imprisonment, they suffered their share of colonial 'pacification' as the state gradually installed
itself. In many situations they provided vocal resistance to British ordinances and legislation but the administration showed a readiness either to play the chiefs against their educated kin or, coercively, to silence both. Before 1874 there had been a policy to encourage African education and to place Africans in responsible positions in the administration of the colony, though British suspicion of the Western-educated African was present. In 1868, for example, the Secretary of State for the Colonies had remarked that it would be better to have 'nothing to do with the educated natives' as a body. This policy changed when formal colonisation of the Gold Coast Protectorate was effected. Colonisation was declared by Orders in Council in 1874 and required now neither the consent of, nor even admitted an appeal from, the local population or its leadership. The fundamental obligation of the new colonial state was to 'establish law, order and security'. Caustic remarks about educated Africans began to appear more frequently in Colonial reports and correspondence. Kimble cites A.W.L. Henning of the Colonial Office who, in 1875, registered the view that 'the educated natives or scholars have always been a thorn in the side of the government of the Gold Coast. They have been at the bottom of most trouble on the coast for some years.' The educated Africans were, however, undaunted and demonstrated their resilience in 1894, the year of the Lands Bill. The intention of this Bill was, as Kimble puts it, that the whole country should be taken over as 'Crown land and administered to greater advantage than the inhabitants could do it for themselves'. This led to legislation to vest waste lands, forests and minerals in the Crown. In an organised rally against this inordinate extension of Colonial power the celebrated Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) was formed by the educated African community. The position of the ARPS was relatively simple. It reminded the administration that the coastal areas and the immediate hinterland, now called colony, had not been acquired by consent, cession or treaty. The protracted debate that ensued was resolved through a modification of the original Bill into the Concessions Ordinance of 1900. In essence, this provided the administration with similar powers to those which the initial Bill would have done and required individuals or communities to establish their ownership to land before conceding or leasing it to speculators. Other legal parameters were set by the Ordinance in relation to land use and title to lands.

The circumstances under which this Bill was conceived and executed gives it some importance in the political economy of colonial capitalism. After 1874, when the Gold Coast was formally colonised, expatriate capitalist interests poured into the country in search of fortune. Stories of land full of gold gained further vigour as speculators offered monies and presents to chiefs and other individuals or groups for land. It was in an attempt to control the 'anarchic' course of capitalist development that the colonial state intervened. The state argument for intervention was paternalistic; it intended to protect the interest of African people against greedy speculators. A careful reading between the lines reveals that the colonial state was apprehensive that the mining process was getting out of hand and that profits were evading the state's taxes. Its intervention, then, was to maintain the conditions of capitalist development that it thought proper but not to deny the development of capitalism. For the same reason the state would intervene and control labour-recruitment and the process of proletarianisation in the north in the interests of capital in the mining industry.

The pacification of Ashanti was more abrupt, more violent and less conciliatory.
For some time Ashanti military power had confounded the British. Hence, British relations with Ashanti had remained largely military and British policy had been mainly directed towards protecting its own traders. Politically, Ashanti power was conceived as presenting a 'potential threat to British trade and influence', as Kimble puts it, and especially the Ashanti monopoly over the northern transit trade. There had been frequent demands from and deputations to the colonial office by the various expatriate Chambers of Commerce to subjugate Ashanti and open the area for trade. In 1874 a military expedition with over two thousand troops marched on Ashanti. Its purpose was to deal an effective and decisive blow to Ashanti and to occupy Kumasi, its capital. A victory here, it was maintained, would guarantee the freedom of inland trade routes. Two decades later Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, vowed to put a stop once and for all to the 'intolerable nuisance' of Ashanti which had continued to obstruct the interests of 'civilisation' and trade. Kumasi was occupied in 1897 and the asantehene, Prempeh, deported.

The stage was then set for the construction of the paraphernalia of a colonial state in Ashanti. The military apparatus was established first with an Ashanti Resident who was required to maintain peace and order in accordance with the demands of British colonisation and to encourage and satisfy expatriate economic interest by opening the way to the north. No concessions of land were to be granted without the governor's sanction but a quarter in Kumasi was to be assigned for foreign traders and sites allocated to mission schools. Portions of the Volta region of Ghana were relatively late in coming under British control, but, as Kwaku's exhaustive work on the region demonstrates, similar techniques were employed.

The Colonial State in Northern Ghana, 1902 and After

By 1902, then, when the colonial state was formally extended to the north, it had had considerable experience of 'pacifying the natives'. The Imperial Order in Council of 1902 defined, described and stipulated the principles of political control over about 30,000 square miles of savannah under the Northern Territories Protectorate. The general circumstances that led to this have been described by Thomas. They arose from competition between British, French and German capitalist imperialism as each vied to control the 'trade up the Volta through Salaga to the North' and the other markets 'which are the converging points of roads from the coast as well as from the far interior, and to which caravans and others resort'. British attempts to control the trade and trade routes had been previously ascertained through treaties of 'friendship and freedom of trade', some of them contracted and signed for the British by the African civil servant, George Ekem Ferguson. They were not treaties of protection and no part or section of the treaties implied that the indigenous population had asked for or accepted British protection. In substance, they had allowed British movement and trade in the region. British influence had thus been granted in Northern Ghana with the exception of the narrow strip of land mass at the eastern corner of the country which became Northern Togoland under German colonial control until 1919 when it was given to the British under a League of Nations mandate.

Immediately following the Orders in Council of 1902, military rule was established. In its dealings with the indigenous population it was as curt and precise as military orders. Chamberlain wrote to the Governor of the Colony:
With regard to the Northern Territories I have decided not to proceed with the scheme for appointing an administrator . . . It appears to me . . . that in some respects the form of administration of the Northern Territories should be different . . . Speaking broadly, the functions of the Resident or Commissioner in the Northern Territories will for some time to come be largely of a semi-military character, while the resident in Ashanti will be occupied with questions connected with the development of the gold-mining industry.

The specific reason for this was the suppression of the Mamprusi who had rebelled against the appropriation of powers not granted in the treaties. The bitter experience of the British in their confrontation with stubborn Ashanti imperialism made them determined to curb other potential rebellions, which they did with impunity. Secondly, the administration needed, effectively and abruptly, to terminate and/or control the trade relations between the north and its western Sudanese trading partners and to redirect trade southwards. Finally, the administration needed to provide the required structure for forced labour conscription which had begun in the region prior to formal colonisation.

The northern region was integrated into the emerging new economy primarily as a recruiting ground for labour to the capitalist enclaves. Labour recruitment had started as early as 1876 with small-scale conscription into the constabulary force and then into work-gangs for the construction of infrastructure. By the turn of the century, and with the hindsight of 'successful' labour conscription, the administration agreed not only to allow labour conscription by the mines but to apply force when necessary and to supervise the process. In 1907, a year after the previously informal conscriptions were formalised through the keeping of records, the Governor informed the Legislative Council that 'the population of the Northern Territories have usually furnished the bulk of recruits to the Gold Coast Regiment, the balance being made up of the immigrants from neighbouring colonies' . . . and that, 'the Northern Territories have continued and were still continuing to supply the number of recruits required'. The sporadic forms of labour conscription which ensued to meet the requirements of the 'expanding' economy made it necessary that colonial officers in the north be given extensive powers of action without lengthy bureaucratic consultation and letters. Consequently the chief commissioner of the region became a virtual ruler presiding over both civil and criminal courts, while the district commissioners acted like rulers in their own right. These powers were reinforced by the Governor through the exclusion of solicitors and attorneys from the courts of the region. This led to a more repressive local administration than in the south with extensive powers and a blatant use of force in recruiting labourers as northerners failed to respond as 'rational economic men' to the opportunity for wage earning.

The administrative structure that was established was constituted of the second battalion of the Gold Coast Regiment with its capital at the heart of the region, Gambaga, and officers who acted as district commissioners commanding detachments to their various areas. This structure was unfavourable to any indigenous political institutions as it became imperative to undercut and subjugate all other forms of political authority. The first essential was to install 'order' and to do so a number of 'Sergeant Major' Chiefs were created in complete disregard of local institutions. The administration ignored the rules of succession to political office and appointed its own personnel, usually from outside the royal lineage, thus providing new forms of privilege and class. The new patterns and crisis of class formation, new alliances and power struggles as well as the incidents of fratricide and suicide that this led to have been vividly
documented by Braimah and Goody in their work *Salaga: The Struggle for Power.*

A modification of military rule was carried through in 1906 but what followed was not very different. A constabulary force replaced the army battalion to cut down administrative costs and for the next 30 years was as effective in its supervisory functions as the army had been. It immediately undertook 'physical' measures to neutralise any potential confrontation from the African population. British intelligence reports on Northern Ghana for this period indicate the strategy by which this was done. They were described in a letter from one District Commissioner to the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories in 1916:

1. Identifying the fighting strength of every ethnic group by generally taking a census of the sturdy male population;
2. specification of what kind of weapon used in battle by the ethnic group;
3. conscripting the men into the army or the police with a view to depleting the general fighting population;
4. economic potential of any town or village to be noted;
5. all Danish guns owned by the male population to be licensed or confiscated.

Resistance to these measures was violently crushed and the participants conscripted into labour gangs or sometimes imprisoned. Many of them were conscripted into the army or police, hence the inflated numbers of northerners in the ranks of these institutions.

Other methods were directed against indigenous leaders of chiefly rank. These included both demoting chiefs from office and encouraging disrespect for the jurisdiction of their courts. With a series of ordinances, the economic and religious bases of the chiefly class were undermined and consequently desecrated. For example, alluvial gold was the property of chiefs. The River Ordinance of 1903 made river-dredging punishable. In 1908, the Native Customs Ordinance made the 'worshipping of other gods' punishable and, following the Deportation Ordinance of 1918, a deportable offence. In 1927 the Northern Territories Lands and Native Rights Ordinance was passed. As Pogucki explains, this turned 'the whole ... land of the Protectorate, occupied or not, into crown lands', and thus undercut a further basis of the privileges of the chiefly class.

District Commissioners, acting within the purview of their power, forcefully removed chiefs whose actions were inconsistent with British policy. For example, in January 1926 the Commissioner of Northern Mamprusi removed the chief for refusing to supply labour for the mines. Saaka has accounted for these kinds of activities in terms of the 'idiosyncracies of commissioners who were isolated at the remotest hinterland and thus much less under the supervision of the central government'. Such an explanation is inadequate and does not grasp the extent of the colonial bureaucratic machinery and its operation. It is true that commissioners did sometimes act 'unilaterally'. However, their pursuit of policy, even in the remotest areas, was ascertained through the bureaucratic linkages and organisation of which they constituted a middle level position. Thus specific instructions were given to these officers in the Northern Territories which stated *inter alia* that 'they were to be given all possible freedom of action' and that 'something more than a perfunctory execution of (instructions) is expected ... But they must clearly understand that it is their duty to keep the chief commissioner informed of the conditions and progress of their commands'. They did this by keeping official diaries which were sent to their superiors on request.
In the light of this one cannot agree that the district commissioners arrogated to themselves supervisory functions including executive and judicial powers. Saaka's argument begs the question of the linkages between the central administration and its local appendages and under-emphasises the source from which district commissioners derived their norms of operation.

The same extensive powers were used to prevent and later slow down the extension of missionary education in an attempt to supervise the gradual restructuring of pre-capitalist values, institutions and social relations in the north. Permission for the establishment of missions was not granted until the Governor had demanded and considered a report 'as to whether the establishment of the missions ... is not detrimental to the status of the white man in this country'. Permits were eventually granted to Catholic rather than Protestant missions on the grounds which Kimble cites that 'natives who have adopted the Roman Catholic religion are much more amenable and law-abiding than those who have embraced other religious beliefs'. This brought the colonial administration in conflict with the Wesleyan missionaries.

District Commissioners were especially required to encourage trade as well as supervise the administration stores and protect the few expatriate merchants who entered the north. They were to explain to the local population that markets had been established to provide them with European products suited to their needs and to impress upon them the necessity of greater industry to earn money to buy such products. These were items such as cheap cotton prints and shirts, tin-sardines, coleman lamps, kerosene, hoes and knives and a miscellany of ordinary items which were once produced by local artisans. And there was the bicycle for the most 'enterprising' northerners. These items of trade would gradually displace local skilled men as they pushed their products out of the markets.

The character of the colonial state in the north was shown in the violence of the measures it took to transform aspects of the economic organisation of the region. There was initially the violence associated with the closure of trading centres and trade routes. There was also the violence associated with the creation of government centres sometimes through burning traditional market areas. Within the northern region, Tamale, Bole and Gambaga, the government centres, replaced traditional markets at Nalerigu, Nyanga and Yendi, which gradually stagnated and slowly lost local artisans and entrepreneurs. These colonial centres attracted a sizeable 'foreign' population and initially put a strain on local food production and supplies. The local population withdrew their participation in the new markets and organised small produce markets in surrounding villages. This led to some shortages of food in the new government centres. In an attempt to solve this, the colonial officers shut down these rural markets and ordered the residents to bring their commodities to the headquarters towns. The Colonial Secretary in a speech to open one of these newly created markets in 1908 explained that:

I have asked you to meet me all together ... so that you may all see the new town which we are making the centre of administration and which we have no doubt will very soon form the distribution centre of trade ... we are here to encourage trade in your midst ... From time to time your commissioner will tell you what is good for trade ... and you must follow his advice ... (my emphasis).

An important appendage to the creation of the new market centres was the
introduction and circulation of British currency. Most local traders had organised their own trade some way away from the colonial centres to avoid the intervention of colonial officials. British currency was temporarily confined to the colonial centres while the cowrie, the indigenous currency, was pushed into the periphery to be hoarded by traders and others. When the arm of the colonial state reached them, however, cowries could no longer be converted into the 'official' currency and cowrie capital became suddenly useless.

The creation of new towns and the destruction of traditional markets and of the indigenous currency should be seen within the general context of the installation of colonial capitalism. The new market with European goods undercut indigenous production and, as Bering describes, the prosperity of the outlying areas diminished. The resources in the region were not to be commercialised into cash crops. While expatriate capitalists showed an interest in the development of the cattle, shea-butter, groundnuts, hides and skins of the north during legislative council debates, the colonial state systematically prevented such developments. The labour reserve of the north was not the product of neglect but of the systematic exclusion of capital investment.

The Colonial State, the Crown Colony and the Northern Region

It was the restructuring of the north as a labour reserve which accounts for the sharp contrast between its administration and that of other regions of Ghana. We have described the installation of a military administration, the replacement of indigenous leaders and the powers of the district commissioners above. We elaborate on this a little further below.

Ferguson and Wilks have described the singular character of the colonial domination in the north: 'the chiefs are practically powerless ... they have tended to become sergeant majors through whom the administration can address the rank and file ... virtually no attempt was made to utilise the pre-colonial system of authority. 'In reality', they conclude, 'the administration is a direct one'.

In the administration of a Crown Colony, the Secretary of State, a cabinet minister in the British parliament, was made responsible for colonial territories. He appointed governors who were responsible for the effective administration of the territory. Within the colony the governor supervised executive and legislative councils with powers conferred on them by the secretary of state. The executive council was constituted of heads of various departments of the administration in the colony. The legislative council, originally established in 1850 in the Gold Coast, was constituted by official and unofficial (expatriate business interests) nominees and, from 1927 after a long struggle, elected African members. The governor supervised local administration through regional and district commissioners and their intermediaries, the chiefs. The place of the chief within this bureaucratic structure is described by Burns as follows:

The election of the chief is left to the people as it always has been, and always must be, for so long as the chiefs remain responsible for priestly as well as civil functions. But the chief is not necessarily the Native Authority recognised by the Governor although as a rule the Governor willingly recognises the chief and his state council as the Native Authority. When the people themselves cannot agree as to the election of a chief, or where the chief and his council prove incompetent to perform the functions of Native Authority, the Governor has power under the law to appoint other persons as the Native Authority.
The fundamental object of the colonial state was to find a subordinate ruler willing to collaborate and to integrate him into the structure of administration. Those not willing or recalcitrant were dealt with appropriately. The administration that was established in northern Ghana, however, differed remarkably from those in the south. None of the indigenous leaders were included in the day-to-day administration. The British relied on the 'sergeant-major' chiefs who possessed no traditional basis of authority, privilege, tribute or reverence. They were not even made responsible for any participation in decision-making. By contrast, from very early on in the southern regions chiefs and local leaders had been included in the administration if only to a very limited extent. In the central region, as Owusu has observed, 'the so-called absolute and autocratic power (of the governor) in relation to chiefs and people was hardly ever, if at all, exercised'.

A further case in point is that of representation on the legislative council. Guggisberg, Governor from 1917-29, had enlarged the numbers of local representatives on the council, giving Africans a relatively larger voice in central government. The Native Administration Ordinance of 1927 formalised the integration of the southern chiefs as paid officials, subject to the discipline of district commissioners, within the colonial administrative structure. The Ordinance created Provincial Councils for head chiefs where they might discuss and make suggestions to the legislative council to which they were also entitled to elect representatives. The Legislative Council of 1927 had 30 members including the Governor, 15 officials and 14 unofficial members. Of the latter six were paramount chiefs selected by the Provincial Councils, five Europeans represented banking, shipping, mercantile and mining interests and there were three Africans nominated from the Western educated class.

These constitutional reforms were consistent with the general role of the colonial state as it supervised (capitalist) 'development' in the colony where the typical British point of view to the end was that what 'mattered' in Africa was 'economic development', as Wraith put it, and not 'polities'. And economic development meant that the administration should smooth the path for expatriate business to accumulate profits. Guggisberg defended his decision to give more seats to chiefs than to the Western-educated class on the new legislative council on the grounds that 'if this small but very noisy minority (the educated African elite) had its way (they) would plunge the Gold Coast into ... financial and mercantile chaos' and that should self-government be granted to the colony, which would mean the ascendancy of such Africans 'Manchester merchants would be wise to explore other areas of investment in the world'.

In an elaborate speech which introduced his reforms Guggisberg stated:

The Provincial Councils have been formed to elect head chiefs to the Legislative Council. It is intended to develop them still further by encouraging each Provincial Council to meet and confer on the general welfare of the divisions comprising each province. It is hoped in this way to provide the chiefs with an institution against the disintegrating effects of modern civilisation, while at the same time giving them an opportunity of conferring on the problems which the advent of modern civilisation must inevitably introduce into the country.

It will be seen that the introduction of Provincial Councils is a most important innovation, and is likely to lead to the betterment of the rule of chiefs and their councils, without interfering with native institutions.

Ambitious and paternalistic as this then was in all its intentions, the reforms
were not applied in the northern region where indigenous institutions had suffered the worst abuses. In fact, northern members were deliberately excluded from the legislative council until 1950. Before this date, the north had been 'represented' indirectly through its chief commissioner in whom the governor had vested considerable powers of legislation and decision. Nevertheless his function as a member of the legislative council was strictly limited and fell far short of any power to register discontent on the part of the northern population. One of the Colony’s governors alluded to this in reply to questions in 1932:

... I must rule out the order of the Honorable member. Matters affecting the Northern Territories except financial question are not within the purview of this council. I cannot allow this debate to include matters affecting the Northern Territories unless direct questions of finance are involved.

Yet by the 1930s all other provinces were represented in the legislative council by a combination of interest groups, chiefs and Western-educated Africans. Alongside these, but with more privileges were, as Padmore describes, the representatives of 'European banking, shipping, mercantile and mining interests who were the watch dogs of their London and Liverpool offices ... and whose main concern was to oppose legislation affecting their companies'. Padmore describes the relationships between these representatives of capital and the officers of the administration. The former always supported the latter in matters relating to the general economic and social welfare of Africans, while British officials always supported the representatives of capital when radical Africans among elected members tried to interfere with the economic privileges they enjoyed. It was the collusion between the two which enabled the colonial state to pursue consistently its policy of recruiting cheap labour from the north.

Guggisberg had pursued his reforms of the legislative council as if the northern part of the country did not exist. However, he did give vague promises of future developments, albeit to be carefully supervised and only to be instituted when the north was 'ready'. His view of the north was generally that the 'Native Affairs' of the region were less contentious (meaning under firmer control) than in the south. Therefore any constitutional changes which would affect the structure of domination in the region were only to be possible at some later, unspecified, time. It was in this light that the Chief Commissioner, in his memorandum on 'The Policy of the Northern Territories' in 1928, observed that:

Native Administration on sound lines would be a success in the future when the youth of the Northern Territories have been educated to take their places in the native courts, treasuries, prisons, police, public works and chief's councils which it would be necessary to establish; but it will take a decade before any success in that direction will be possible.

The Commissioner's particular concern in relation to constitutional changes was the acute shortage of qualified (Western-educated) northern men to occupy requisite positions. Undoubtedly yes! But his observation conveniently concealed the restrictive educational policy of the administration which had delayed the introduction of education into the region. Thus, while northerners provided cheap labour to the south, it was southerners who were, for example, the teachers in the north — and paid higher salaries than in the south as an incentive to work there.

The administration's sole effort to extend capitalism to the north was through labour recruitment. There was virtually no attempt to provide social services. Expatriate capital was prevented from investing in the north. Consequently the
benefits' and the 'positive effects' of capital accumulation were not available in the north. Thus colonial policy shaped the process of class formation in Ghana during this period. The extensive use of the north as a recruiting ground would lead to the proletarianisation of the region as a whole so that the rank and file of wage-labourers would be dominated by Northerners. The absence of education retarded the process of their inclusion in the emerging 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' and professionals in the country. Among Southerners, Northerners were seen as 'behind' and 'uncivilised'. Among the newly emerging African petit bourgeois of commerce — cocoa farmers, cocoa-brokers and enterprising retailers (mainly women) of the expatriate commercial houses (Paterson Zochonis, United Africa Company, United Trading Company, etc.) there were virtually no northerners.

It was not until the 1930s that a government decision was made to consider the possibility of introducing and encouraging 'Native Administration' in the north. This occurred partly in response to embryonic northern consciousness resulting in an organised protest in early 1930 by the few educated northerners and some of the chiefs. They demanded an increase in educational facilities, an end to labour conscription, a gradual replacement of the southern 'expatriates' and the abolition of the special privileges they enjoyed. In 1932, a new Ordinance was presented to the Legislature which the Governor introduced thus:

This part of the Gold Coast has for some 30 years been administered almost entirely on the principle of Direct Rule. That form of administration has not been unsuccessful insofar as it has secured tranquility.

What kind of 'success' had it been? Intensive labour recruitment had been the day-to-day demand on chiefs. Fra-Fra and Mossi resistance to recruitment had been crushed. Educational and health facilities had not been introduced. However, no major change in the administration or in political representation in the north took place until 1946 when the Northern Territories Territorial Council was formed. Already by this time independent government, together with the introduction of a Parliamentary system and of universal franchise, was being demanded in the south.

Conclusion
'Pacification' opened up Ghana and the north to domination by the colonial state and to colonial capitalism. In this process, the northern region was not neglected or isolated but actively dominated and integrated into the economy as a whole. Labour was recruited for the capitalist mining enclaves and other capitalist interests that required labour. The northerners came to provide most of the cheap labour in the southern and Ashanti regions. Force was demonstrated and used to secure the supply of labour and to hasten the restructuring of the northern pre-capitalist economy. The extension of capitalism to the north in the form of wage labour recruitment underlined the emerging position of northerners in the Ghanaian class formation.

Bibliographic Note
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Excerpts from speeches by the Colonial Secretary and by district and regional commissioners are drawn from ADM/56/1/44 (Ghana National Archives, Accra); on the early stages of 'pacification' in the north see also ADM/56/1/46 and ADM/56/1/73 and ADM/1/7 (Ghana National Archives, Tamale).

By-Day' Boys and Dariga Men: Casual Labour versus Agrarian Capital in Northern Ghana

Nicholas Van Hear

The development of agrarian capitalism in Africa has accelerated in recent years and is taking several forms. In some areas, peasant labour is managed by state and international agencies and exploited on irrigation and settlement schemes; multinational agribusiness is frequently involved. Elsewhere private entrepreneurship by Africans, often subsidised by the state, is prominent, and the hire of wage labour by such entrepreneurs is widespread and expanding. It is with the latter form of capitalist agriculture that this paper is concerned.

In many parts of Africa the development of capitalist agriculture has led to immiseration among rural people and increased their exploitation. But this has not always been the case and it is not inevitable. In northern Ghana the rural population has not succumbed to the all-powerful, rampant capitalism of the orthodox Marxist model. The real activity of rural labour has constrained the emergence of capitalist rice farming from the late 1960s. Through their struggles, labourers have done relatively well. This paper will examine how capitalist farmers attempted to mobilise labour, to induce workers' commitment to capitalist production and how exploitation is carried on. All three processes involve struggles between capital and labour which have shaped agricultural development in the north.

The Development of Agrarian Capitalism in Northern Ghana

The Second World War marked the beginning of serious government interest in northern agriculture, prior to which the region was treated as a reserve of migrant labour for the export economy of the south. With the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts in effect, state intervention was most visible in the Gonja Project, a sibling of the similar schemes in Tanganyika, Nigeria and the Gambia. But ultimately more important was the visit to the north in 1948 of the West African Rice Mission to assess the possibilities of large-scale rice cultivation. Initial experiments were unsuccessful but in the 1950s farmers' enthusiasm led to a proliferation of mechanised rice schemes.

State intervention accelerated under Nkrumah and the CPP, particularly with the 'socialisation' of agriculture from 1961 which stressed large-scale mechanised cultivation. Many projects failed, but there were significant improvements in rural infrastructure which laid the basis for the later development of agriculture in the north. The military regime which overthrew Nkrumah and the civilian government which succeeded it were opposed to major state participation and promoted private entrepreneurship in agriculture instead. The state sector was
largely dismantled, releasing cheap machinery and redundant workers to an emerging class of capitalist farmers who were encouraged by generous subsidies to enter large-scale rice farming.

Between 1970 and 1972, private farmers — mainly in the Dagomba district around Tamale in the Northern Region, but also in the Upper Region of the Fumbusi valley — doubled both the acreage of rice cultivated and their output. This expansion continued under the National Redemption Council which took power in 1972. Under its ‘Operation Feed Yourself’ campaign, the new military regime offered farmers relatively high guaranteed minimum prices and cheap credit and subsidised mechanical land clearance and harvesting. Local Dagomba capitalist farmers were joined by civil servants, high ranking officers and bureaucrats anxious to take advantage of the rice boom based on a partnership between private entrepreneurship and state capital. Several hundred such entrepreneurs farmed areas of between 100 and 4,000 acres and several thousand others cultivated smaller though substantial acreages: the total area under cultivation varied between 150,000 and 200,000 acres in the 1970s.

A labour force of permanent and casual workers grew rapidly as the expansion of production gathered pace. The permanent workers were recruited from among the farmers’ poorer kin, from workers made redundant from the state agricultural sector and from the pool of unemployed men in the towns. Adult tractor drivers might be accompanied by a number of young ‘apprentices’ or mates, and they formed the core of the labour force on rice farms. Commonly permanent workers were paid a monthly sum (between 60 and 70 cedis in 1978) and fed daily; some also expected to be loaned a piece of land and machinery, seed and fertiliser to cultivate rice. There were frequent disputes over these payments and mates were rarely paid.

While permanent workers were often in conflict with employers, they were at the same time, as supervisors, often at the sharp end of the struggle to extract surplus value from casual labour. Daily-paid workers — the ‘by-days’ — were employed for clearing new land, broadcasting seed and fertiliser, weeding, hand-harvesting, threshing, bagging and transporting harvested paddy. The next section describes the mobilisation, exploitation and resistance of these workers up to the late 1970s. There is evidence to suggest that conditions observed in this period still pertained during the succeeding Limann regime (1979-81). The lot of farm workers under the revolutionary government of Rawlings and the Provisional National Defence Council remains to be investigated.

**The Mobilisation of Labour for Capitalist Rice Farming**

Although labour was hired by some peasant farmers, there is little evidence that casual wage workers were engaged in the north on any substantial scale prior to the development of large-scale rice farming. It can be assumed with confidence that the large casual labour force that developed rapidly from around 1970 was almost wholly the creation of the expanding rice industry.

Initially, in Dagomba at least, casual labour was sought and found in the village immediately adjacent to the farms. Farmers recruited workers through agents in the villages, often friends or relatives. Recruitment was lubricated with promises of free ploughing and other inputs, and was cemented by appeals to communal sentiments of pan-Dagomba brotherhood. Labouring for cash also provided the means, without having to migrate for work, of satisfying desires for consumer
goods and of buying or hiring new means of production. Together, these appeals to ‘primordial loyalties’ and the further commoditisation of items of peasant production and consumption proved sufficient to generate labour for the new rice farms. But these impulses did not prove sufficient to secure adequate commitment of peasant men to casual labour on rice farms. Meanwhile, a market for casual labour was developing in Tamale and other towns, workers gathering every day at ‘by-day labour centres’ to be hired. It was estimated that in November and December 1971, 4,000 young men were hired from Tamale every day at these centres, together with a great number from villages in the rice districts.

Fears that peasant farming would be damaged by the exodus of labour to rice farming proved unfounded. Very quickly, peasants perceived that rice farmers did not honour promises of goods and services in any consistent or acceptable way. It was rather the chiefs and the labour agents, together with a few favoured peasants under the patronage of rice farmers, who benefited from cheap or free ploughing, other inputs and occasional loans.

Men began to desert rice labouring for their own subsistence farms or increased their efforts in small-scale cash cropping. Several factors encouraged this trend. There was the re-orientation of policy in the 1970s by various development agencies in favour of small-scale farming. More important was the soaring price of foodstuffs as the 1970s progressed. Small-scale farming as an alternative preferable to rice labouring was also encouraged, ironically, by improvements made in the infrastructure for the benefit of large-scale cultivation. Further, even though promises of free ploughing, fertiliser and seed were not generally redeemed, some peasants were able to secure irregular access to these new means of production. There is some evidence of expansion in the early 1970s of acreages of peasant-produced staples — millet, maize, guinea corn and groundnuts — and also of rice itself.

This withdrawal from wage labour by peasant men — felt by rice farmers from around 1972 — depended on changes in the markets for peasant-produced crops and the relative vitality of peasant farming in the Dagomba district. It would, for example, have been impossible in the impoverished north-east. Rice labouring was increasingly left to women and children from the villages, but this labour had to be supplemented more and more by transporting workers from Tamale, over long distances and at great cost to the rice farmers.

As labourers became aware of their improving bargaining position, wage demands began to rise. Competition for labour increased as the growing number of big farmers, who now included many southerners, military men and civil servants, tried to outbid each other for workers. Higher wages were also a consequence of bringing villagers into contact with urban workers; farmers complained that Tamale workers ‘poisoned the minds’ of the villagers with their wage demands. From 1969 until 1973 the daily wage rate was fairly constant at C£0.50 to C£0.60 for adult men, C£0.20 to C£0.40 for women and C£0.20 for children — farmers graded rates by gender and age according to the work they expected from each category. These increases more than kept pace with rises in the cost of living which roughly doubled between 1970 and 1975 (see Table 1). Food also had to be provided.
Table I: Daily Rates of Casual Workers, 1970-1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>By-date rates:</th>
<th>Cost of living</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adult men</td>
<td>(1975 = 100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in cedis)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-73</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1.50-2.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>2.00-3.00</td>
<td>156.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>3.00-4.00</td>
<td>337.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>4.00-5.00</td>
<td>584.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>5.00-6.00</td>
<td>903.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>8.00-10.00</td>
<td>1,355.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>3,473.0 (June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In 1973 Cedi.00 = US$0.87; in 1978 Cedi.00 = US$0.36. There were further devaluations in 1979 and 1983. The real, black market values were up to 20 times the official rates by the late 1970s.


Farmers responded to the scarcity and rising cost of labour in two main ways. Those who had accumulated sufficient capital adopted labour-saving machinery or techniques of cultivation. They hired land-clearing machines and experimented with seed drills and weedkillers to eliminate manual labour. Technical problems reduced the impact of the latter, and the only significant technological displacement of labour was made by the introduction of the combine harvester — although this too had a limited effect because of a shortage of the machines and of spare parts for them.

Farmers' second reaction to their labour problem was to move to new areas where, it was hoped, there was fresh, inexperienced labour and little competition for it. Land was still easy to acquire and, after three or four years of ecologically destructive cultivation, many farmers simply abandoned their fields for fresh areas. It was essentially a new form of shifting cultivation, mechanised and on a large scale. But farmers colonising the new areas did not find the ample labour supply they expected, nor were the new labourers as co-operative as had been hoped. Frequently only women and children would work. Although in some of the new areas wages were lower than the norm — farmers noting gleefully that 'the women's eyes are not open' — pay demands soon rose and in some new districts they reached the highest anywhere.

Neither mechanisation nor shifting to new areas gave many rice farmers more than shortlived relief from their labour problem. There is little sign that farmers had yet resorted to a third possibility — that of intensifying labour by imposing greater control over the workers. Their thinking evidently still harked back to the days when labour was cheap, plentiful and easily secured. But the quantity and quality of work — and hence the amount of surplus value extracted — was now becoming an issue, imposed on employers by an increasingly intractable labour force.

Village women, hitherto regarded by the farmers as docile, gullible and cheap,
had discovered their value in the labour market. But rather than holding out for higher wages, they shortened their working day. Using the irrefutable argument that they had to fetch water and cook in the morning and evening, the women (and children) pushed back the time of starting work and brought forward the time of finishing and any attempt to make them work beyond the time they had decided to ‘close’ was met with sullen refusal. Farmers universally complained that from about 1974 onwards women and children would not come to work before 10 or 11 o’clock, and that by 3pm they would stop work and prepare to go home. By 1976 few farmers could make casual labourers work for more than five hours a day, by 1978 this had been reduced to four hours in some cases. The hours worked were crucial for those farmers who had to transport workers a long way to their farms. On the rough roads to and from the farming areas the time taken to transport a trailer load of workers further limited the potential working day. Even the hours that the women did work were deemed unsatisfactory. According to the farmers the women ‘became lazy’ and work deteriorated in quality. They complained that the women worked too slowly, that they left areas bare when broadcasting seed and fertiliser, pulled or cut out rice instead of weeds, trampled on weeds rather than removing them or trampled rice itself. The farmers’ only recourse was to increase supervision. Women were lined up and followed by an overseer and in some cases task-work was introduced as a means of labour control. But increased supervision was not a success, and farmers had to concede that large numbers of women could not be controlled.

Here then was a second form of resistance to mobilisation for wage labour. Since the women knew that they were to be paid by the day, they shortened the day and slowed down the work rate within it. This behaviour was explained by the farmers as the ‘nature’ of village women, but it had a rather practical rationality for the women themselves. At the expense of the labour time bought by the farmer with the wage, the women were reclaiming time for domestic labour. It is significant that some women further annoyed farmers by taking time during the working day to gather firewood: they were using paid labour time to spread out their domestic workload. Women may have entered rice labouring to gain financial independence from their husbands, accepting the intensified total workload (ie: domestic plus wage work) in the first five years of capitalist rice farming as a reasonable exchange for their increased autonomy. When, after the withdrawal of men and the ensuing labour shortage, the opportunity came to reduce the intensity of their labour or the total length of the working day, the women were not slow to seize upon it. Not only did they lessen their rice labouring workload by ‘becoming lazy’, but they tried to reduce the intensity of their domestic labour — which had been compressed into a shorter time — at the expense of the hour bought by capitalist rice farmers.

The Composition of the Labour Force and the Organisation of Rice Labouring
The withdrawal of adult peasant men from rice labouring and the resistance of peasant women increased recruitment of Tamale and other towns. The number of workers gathering at the by-day centres grew, stimulated by the further expansion of capitalist rice farming. These labourers were drawn from disparate social groups. The mainstay of the labour force remained young boys, some at school, others not. They were employed illegally since the Labour Act Decree of 1967 (NLC Decree 157) prohibits the employment of children under 15. The
young boys were joined by secondary school students earning cash in their vacations to pay school fees, youths seeking to accumulate money to set up their own farms, government labourers working at weekends, unemployed tractor drivers, a few impoverished peasant farmers and some homeless boys and boy thieves. This heterogeneous group of workers was, in contrast to the workforce drawn from the villages, almost exclusively male.

As the proportion of urban casual labourers in the rice workforce increased, there were changes in the organisation of work. At the beginning of the 1970s most of the work was daily rated, usually done by mixed gangs of men, women and children. However, some older men contracted work, usually by the acre or half-acre. Clearing, weeding and harvesting were contracted in this way. It was not until the labour shortage became serious and village women’s resistance had emerged that task-work was introduced on a wide scale, mainly for weeding. Farmers hoped that task-work would improve speed and quality and reduce the need for supervision. The rate per unit ‘cut’ — usually 13 paces square — was negotiable, but generally stayed just above the current by-day rate. The flexibility of such task-work suited young men, particularly those anxious to accumulate cash for their farms or school fees. They could often manage two plots a day, and more if they were fit, so that it was possible to earn in a day up to three times the current by-day rate. By the late 1970s few urban youths would accept daily rated work. Some organised themselves into loose groups who would contract jobs by the acre or whole farms. Often they specialised in particular tasks, groups being known as expert in clearing, sowing, weeding, harvesting or bagging paddy. These ‘companies’ increased workers’ bargaining power and their capacity to resist cheating by employers. Their formation marked a growing consciousness among labourers of their collective interest.

Several of these specialist groups were composed not of youths, but of older men who were temporarily ‘proletarianised’. One such company, a group of five who had grown up together in a quarter of Tamale, formed in the later 1970s. None of the group at that time had a farm or any other work, but at least three had previously been medium-scale farmers growing rice, maize, guinea corn and yam. They claimed that they had been forced to abandon their farms for lack of capital to reinvest in cultivation. For the members of such groups the main purpose behind labouring was to obtain or expand farms of their own; indeed this ‘company’ accumulated enough capital to resume farming and cultivated a yam farm together.

The new division of labour evidenced in the use of specialist gangs and of semi-skilled labourers was attributed by farmers to the increasing labour shortage, villagers’ short hours, poor work and rising wage demands. There were obvious advantages, however, to be gained in productivity. When a gang was housed on the farm or in a nearby village, its working day was much longer than that of the villagers or the workers from Tamale who had to be transported daily. A group usually paid for its own transport and sometimes bore some of its feeding costs. They worked faster and better than by-day workers. Payment depended on fulfilling the contract, as did the reputation of the gang. Farmers could pick the group most suitable for a particular operation. Groups could be replaced if they did not work well, and if they tired they would be organised in relays. Finally, farmers were relieved of much supervision, simply needing to inspect the work when the labourers reported it completed. But, against all these advantages, the
gangs charged high rates for their work and disputes with employers were common.

Besides generating new forms of labour hire and work organisation, the expansion of rice farming transformed an indigenous form of reciprocal labour exchange as capitalist rice farmers attempted to incorporate into their workforce *daa kpariba* or market-day farming groups. Under the traditional arrangement a number of friends agreed to cultivate collectively each member’s farm on nominated market days. The relationship was a form of mutual aid, ‘white heart work, not a force’, done ‘because you respect the fellow’, and the only obligation on the part of the host was to provide food. If a peasant farmer did not require the group when his turn came around, he could dispose of it, after consultation with the other members, to outsiders. It was this possibility that opened the way for the penetration of money into this form of labour organisation. *Daa kpariba* groups could be hired by capitalist rice farmers, and indeed the development of large-scale rice farming was said by many to be the reason for their monetisation. Rice farmers’ agents were instructed to look around for such groups as well as by-days in the villages, and the hiring of *daa kpariba* companies provided another source, albeit small, for farmers short of labour. The hiring of market day farming groups had for farmers the same advantages as the specialised groups described above; indeed *daa kpariba* was the basis of many of these specialised groups. *Daa kpariba* groups worked a longer day than other casual labourers and their work was of higher quality, because although much of the traditional ethic of the arrangement was ruptured by monetisation, the idea of ‘helping the fellow’ lingered on, bolstered by hopes that tractors and other inputs might be forthcoming. It remains to be seen how long this ethic will survive.

The shortage and rising cost of reliable and good quality labour prompted farmers to utilise yet another source of labour — the prisons. From 1973, the government allowed prisoners to be hired at a low charge on a daily basis. In them it might seem that the farmers had the ultimate in controlled labour, a real captive labour force and an answer to their labour problem. But prisoners proved not to be an entirely submissive workforce. In the early days of the prison labour scheme escaping was very common, although this diminished by the later 1970s. By then prisoners were tacitly demanding more incentives — chiefly cash and cigarettes — to work. The warders who supervised them also had to be kept sweet, it being not unknown for them to direct the prisoners to collect firewood for later sale while hired for farm work. The farmers’ labour problem remained.

The Intensification of the Labour Struggle
As they encountered the resistance of each of these different categories of workers, farmers turned to new sources in search of satisfactory labour. As we have shown, when peasant men from the villages withdrew, farmers had to rely on village women and children, supplemented by workers imported from the urban centres. When village women reduced their hours and the quality of their work, farmers had to import more urban casual labour on a task-work basis. When the young men from the towns raised their wage demands and resisted in other ways, farmers were forced to take on young boys, or to seek out specialist labouring gangs, *daa kpariba* groups or prison labour. But even when labour was successfully secured, the farmers’ problems were not over: there followed a struggle to extract surplus value.
The Struggle at the Centres of Recruitment

One of the most common Dagbani words to be heard at the by-day labour centres was *dariga*, meaning ‘cheat’. ‘*Dariga* men’ were those farmers who would renege on agreements made at the labour markets on pay, hours or amount of task-work. If, as the labourers asserted, there were plenty *dariga* people in the early 1970s; by the late 1970s ‘those who cheat (were) more than those who don’t cheat’, as the farmers’ need to extract surplus value from an intractable labour force led to more intense contention.

Bargaining at the by-day centres seemed incomprehensibly chaotic, but underneath the apparent disorder it was possible to discern an informal but forceful organisation among the labourers based on an acute sense of their bargaining power and a considerable solidarity among them. Most obviously, older labourers — the young men — took on a protective role towards the boys, preventing them from joining *dariga* farmers and being cheated, and bargaining on their behalf. For their part, the young boys confirmed that they ‘followed the grown-ups’ so that they were not cheated, but they were not as gullible as their seniors made out and were quite capable of independent action.

Further evidence of informal organisation and solidarity was the labourers’ collective insistence on a standard rate for a day’s work or for task-work and their responses to unacceptable offers by farmers. Most effective was the informal boycotting of *dariga* farmers. None of the older labourers would approach known cheats for work and they would order the young boys to stay away. They were well aware that these boycotted farmers would have to collect women from the villages who worked very short hours, and that farmers might thus be compelled to return to the labour markets with better offers.

The Struggle at the Workplace

The struggle between farmers and labourers continued at the workplace. Once in trucks or trailers and out of the immediate vicinity of Tamale, the labourers were a captive workforce, almost without independent means of returning since transport was scarce and costly. The farmers, well aware of this potent means of labour control, were inclined then to renege on agreements reached at the by-day centres. Once on the farms, they reduced the rates agreed on, extended the hours of by-day work, or increased the size of task-work plots — when measuring each ‘cut’ by pacing out a plot, farmers added to the agreed number of paces, or made their strides ludicrously long.

Labourers responded to this cheating — the extraction of surplus value over and above that legitimated in the agreement already reached — in a number of ways. Some grudgingly accepted the revised terms of work while resolving not to be picked by a *dariga* man again. Others left the farm and tried to make their own way home. More commonly in the late 1970s the casual workers resorted to collective action. When confronted with an increase in the task or a reduction of their agreed wage, they refused to work and demanded to be taken home. It was made clear that the farmer would not find labourers to work for him again and threats might be thrown in for good measure. Bargaining might then resume and if something like the orginal agreement was reached, the labourers would go back to work.

Militant labourers themselves were not averse to changing the terms of an agreement once they reached the farm. If the fields were very weed-ridden, they
might insist on a re-negotiation of the task and the pay, or a group contract rather than individual task-work, threatening violence to force the farmer's hand. More disputes occurred after the work had been done. Labourers recounted how, after completion of work, farmers refused to pay up or tried to delay payment. Farmers complained that the youths' work was 'not neat' or that they had rushed so as to move on quickly to the next plot. Some farmers therefore limited the youths to one or two plots a day, and made them re-weed poorly worked areas. If they lacked sufficient muscle, the labourers might comply, but then spread word about their bad treatment at the labour centres:

If the farmer is bad the group won't go again and it affects him. It is something like a strike. And he will come and beg us to come. If affects him if one says he won't come, and it affects him more if a group won't go.

Where farmers persistently refused to pay for work done, violence might erupt. The groups of young men who contracted whole farms or jobs by the acre were particularly susceptible to farmers' complaints on farmers or threatening to sabotage farms.

Workers recruited from the villages were involved in the same kinds of disputes as labourers from the by-day centres. They were not usually subject to the extension of working hours, however, since they could leave independently. Village workers rarely resorted to open violence, but their most usual reaction to cheating was simply to refuse to go to the farm the following day, a tactic which was even more effective than a boycott by Tamale labourers. One group of village women hinted at another form of revenge:

If he won't pay we tell the farmer that he won't gain from the rice harvest. We curse the rice by calling the name of a god, and the rice will burn.

Other labourers were not so reticent about their readiness to spoil farms. Dariga led to covert trampling or uprooting of rice. Labourers readily admitted that they cut rice with their machetes if they were maltreated, and many farmers complained of such sabotage.

Arson was another form of redress for labourers. Fires were very common in the northern dry season. Most were set off accidentally but a substantial, though unknown, number were started deliberately. Though few farmers could prove that their labourers were responsible for the fires, the labourers were remarkably forthright about their culpability:

If a farmer is a dariga man, as the by-days are leaving the last one in the trailer will drop match into the field. If a farmer is wicked villagers will take match and set fire, but not if the farmer has a friend in the village. If the farmer is not wicked they won't fire.

'Wickedness' included reducing the agreed wage, claming that work had not been done properly, or authoritarian treatment of the labourers by farmers.

An acute sense of exploitation was developing among villagers in some areas who articulated their perception of strangers getting rich at their expense. Among some urban labourers this sense of exploitation was developing into a consciousness of a common interest of the poor against the rich. They perceived that rice farming and the profits made from it had no regard for traditional morality. For example, after the harvest farmers were expected to give zakat or alms to beggars, either in rice or money, as a form of thanksgiving. Their refusal to do so outraged some of the labourers:
BY-DAY' BOYS AND DARIGA MEN

... these chief farmers, they are very rich. They like plenty money but they wouldn't give zakat. They have to do something. Somebody would go and burn their farm because of that. You go and burn because he isn't doing anything for anybody.

While the struggle between capital and labour occasionally flared into threats or actual violence, sabotage and arson, the day-to-day struggle over the quality of work remained a major problem for the farmers. Loafing on the job had always gone on, but by the late 1970s such inactivity reached what seemed to the farmers outrageous proportions. A whole catalogue of work evasions was recounted by farmers, including pretending to work, feigning sickness, repeated demanding food or water and avoiding strenuous tasks such as collecting and carrying sacks of paddy. There was sometimes an ulterior motive for poor work. Farmers found that seed and fertiliser were broadcast sparsely so that workers could then appropriate surplus bags. Those who hired labour to harvest manually found that the workers allowed a large amount of grain to fall on the ground so that they could return later to glean it.

Theft reached alarming proportions in the late 1970s. Not only rice and fertiliser but any saleable commodity was at risk, including tools, tractor spares and diesel. Besides every-day theft which, although petty, resulted in considerable losses to farmers, there were larger scale operations involving sophisticated organisation and planning and, in some cases, the co-operation of tractor drivers. Both loose and bagged rice were stolen by villagers at night, transported by bicycle and, in one case, in canoes. Not only was the harvested paddy stolen, but farmers discovered that crops were being secretly reaped by villagers; on one large farm, it was discovered that a quarter of the acreage had been harvested overnight by sickle. There was little farmers could do to control theft. Recourse to the police or military, which usually meant house-to-house searches and beatings in the village, was rarely risked. At best the villagers' goodwill and willingness to work would disappear and, at worst, they would fire the farm in retaliation. The only solution available was to increase security on the farms; often armed watchmen were stationed on them.

In the late 1970s then, farmers were faced with an increasingly militant labour force that was not only prepared to defend itself against exploitation but would also take the offensive and press for better pay and conditions. Labourers had a number of potent tactics at their disposal. They could go slow or work badly, 'sit down', boycott dariga farmers and resort to physical attacks on their employers, sabotage and threats of arson. Many farmers thought twice before taking punitive action against labourers, in particular for theft.

To combat this militancy, some farmers relied on relations of patronage they built up, often at great expense, with local villagers. Others were fortunate in the remoteness of their farms which did not allow workers much scope for resistance, since they were totally reliant on the farmer for transport home. The same conditions also precluded theft on any scale. Others had to resort to intensification of supervision. More workers were put on task-work, which was increasingly extended to women, and supervision of task-workers was intensified. Disputes about the amount and quality of task work became more common, labourers resenting close supervision. Some farmers experimented with new forms of labour control. The more astute exploited notions of pride in workmanship. Some who paid well and reliably introduced roll-calls of their regular workers at the by-day centres to build up loyalty. The roll-call also had a
disciplinary function, poor workers being struck from the list. Incentives and differential rewards were also used to some effect. Thus specialist gangs guarded their jobs against incursion, since the addition of more hands would reduce their earnings. Farmers sometime organised competitions between harvesting gangs with prizes for those that harvested most. But such innovations in labour control were only patchily applied and made little difference to the level of the labour struggle.

Downturn and Unemployment
The forms of struggle described above constrained capital accumulation by large-scale farmers and shaped the development of capitalist rice farming. But it would be misleading to characterise the labour struggle as continuously so buoyant; there were times when farmer-employers had the upper hand. A downturn in the industry in the later 1970s temporarily weakened the bargaining power of labour. A bumper rice harvest in 1974-75 was followed by erratic rainfall and as farmers defaulted on loans, the banks tightened up on their lending policy. Restriction on imports as the national economy lunged further into crisis made machinery, spare parts and fuel scarce. Expansion slowed down and acreages may have been reduced, but few farmers went out of business because the black market price of rice was so high. In 1979, production was disrupted during the three-month period of rule by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council when many farmers, beneficiaries of the previous regime, fled harassment and retribution. They returned, somewhat chastened, with the accession of Limann's civilian regime. The near collapse of the national economy in the early 1980s has made any productive activity even more difficult, but phenomenal prices for foodstuffs still make engagement in rice farming profitable.

The effects of the downturn in the rice industry were visible at the by-day labour centres where fewer farmers came to recruit. The scarcity of labour therefore eased. Farmers were better able to stipulate rates of pay, hours of work or size of task-work plots. But labourers did not readily acquiesce to this shift in the labour market; in many cases they refused to work rather than accept poor terms. Several factors mitigated the effects on casual labour of the downturn in the rice industry. Peasant men continued to cultivate and where possible expand their food farms rather than work on large-scale rice farms for a wage. Some women found that they could earn more cash by gathering and selling the nuts of the shea tree, or they harvested peasant groundnut farms for payment rather than work for large-scale rice farmers. Labourers from Tamale had fewer such opportunities, but those who could went into farming for themselves. There were also some other jobs in Tamale for unskilled workers, mainly in building.

These factors helped cushion the effects of the downturn. Wage rates recovered, although they may not have kept pace with the galloping cost of living. Labourers demanded provision of scarce commodities in addition to wages as incentives to work. Although the disruption of rice farming during the Rawlings intervention in 1979 contributed further to its downturn, workers' militancy was not dampened. On the contrary, the Rawlings takeover gave labourers more confidence to resist exploitation and to press their demands. In 1980 workers were demanding 10 cedis to weed a plot of 15 paces square, a sum then far ahead of the current government minimum daily wage which was increased from Ce4.00 to Ce12.00 only later in the year. The increased wages were probably still not commensurate with the rise in the cost of living, but they were indicative of
the continuing bargaining strength of casual labour.

It is likely that the recent social and political upheavals in Ghana have further increased workers' confidence and their bargaining power. Late in 1982 farmers were reported to be complaining of by-day rates of Cedis30.00 plus Cedis10.00 in lieu of a meal. In February 1983, the president of the Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives — a new umbrella organisation embracing eight farmers' bodies, including the Rice Growers' Association — pressed the government to legislate on by-day rates, citing current wages at Cedis60.00 per day. The return of around one million deportees from Nigeria in February and March 1983 might have been expected to depress rural wages. But most of the returnees were urban dwellers unwilling to undertake agricultural wage labour and it unlikely that they will relieve farmers' labour shortages significantly. High rural wage levels will probably be maintained given further upward impetus by the new government minimum rate of Cedis25.00 per day negotiated with the TUC in July 1983.

Conclusion
Much of the farm workers' bargaining power described above derives from the resilience of the peasant household economy. It is commonly argued — in the literature on migrant labour, for example — that the persistence of the peasant household allows the partial reproduction of wage workers within it: this is the basis of migrant labour systems. The obverse can be the case. Given a reasonably viable peasant economy, the household may act as a refuge into which wage labourers may withdraw if the terms of wage labour are considered poor. The viability of the household economy may therefore give workers bargaining strength to press for higher wages and better conditions.

Such has been the pattern in northern Ghana's rice industry, where capitalist farmers have encountered the problem of utilising workers incompletely separated from their means of production. The relative strength of the peasant economy (in Dagomba, though not further north) and the possibility of small-scale commercial farming means that men and women in the rural areas can to a large extent determine for themselves the degree and timing of their incorporation into wage labour. This household-based economy shows little sign of decline and there appears to be no evidence of a long-term trend, such as that claimed elsewhere by some writers, towards destruction of the household and incorporation of its individualised ex-members into a dispossessed proletariat. Indeed the signs are that the ‘traditional’ peasant economy is revitalising in the face of national economic disaster: craft production is reported to be reviving as goods formerly secured on the market are no longer available. The more limited opportunities for urban casual workers, particularly the shortage of land around towns, means that they are more readily mobilised for capitalist rice farming. But these workers too were able to opt out of wage labour on rice farms and were by no means compliant. The withdrawals and resistance of village workers gave urban-drawn casual labour more scope in the labour struggle.

Taking as a whole the period since the inception of capitalist rice farming from around 1970, labourers have done relatively well through their struggles. Their wages have in general kept pace with inflation, and in the early 1970s were ahead of that rate. In addition rural workers have secured food and commodities expensive and hard to obtain. They have also benefited from illicit appropriations associated with their work. They may well have done better than their
counterparts in urban wage employment. These are no mean achievements for any group of Ghanaian workers, let alone agricultural labourers with no formal organisation.

Agrarian capitalism elsewhere in Africa is dogged with similar problems of rural labour shortage deriving from the much discussed ‘flight to the cities’ and the counter-attraction of small-scale commercial farming, particularly of food. A recent ILO report suggests that these factors explain labour shortages on some Kenyan estates and plantations, coincident with unemployment in other sectors. Labour scarcity has been important in the development of capitalist cotton farming in the Sudan. In northern Nigeria, where large-scale grain farming has been promoted under Agricultural Development Projects through subsidised fertiliser, casual wage rates have been driven high since 1974. It is likely that scrutiny of emergent capitalist agriculture in these and other areas will reveal a buoyant rural labour struggle.

Authors Note
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Bibliographic Note


For a schematic framework encompassing the diverse forms of covert labour struggle similar to those considered in this paper, see Cohen, R, ‘Resistance and hidden forms of consciousness amongst African workers’, ROAPE 19, 1980. More generally, my thinking on labour struggles and the development of capitalism has been greatly influenced by the writings of Castoriadis (aka Paul Cardan), especially Cardan, P, Modern capitalism and revolution, (Solidarity, London, 1974).
The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here
(an analysis of the development of the settler state in 19th century Liberia)

Magdalene S. David

Recent years have witnessed a revival of interest among radical scholars in the peripheral state as a specific object of study within the broad realm of political economy. Important debates have focused on the concept of the 'over-developed' post-colonial state, the historical transformation of the state during the de-colonisation process, the form of the peripheral state and its class character, with discussions being based on case studies of former European colonies. This focus, however, leaves aside the form of the peripheral state in societies which did not experience a typical colonial situation — the state in settler societies being a case in point. While the state as found in settler societies such as Algeria, Kenya and Rhodesia has attracted some scholarly attention, the case of the settler state in Liberia has not been discussed in any rigorous or systematic manner.

The failure of the literature on Liberian political economy to establish the specificity of the early form of the Liberian state prompts the present article which reflects a process of working through the historical development of the Liberian state between 1822 (when the first black American emigrants arrived in Liberia) and 1904 (when the settler state was sufficiently established along the coast to attempt inland expansion of its authority), directed by central issues raised in debates on the peripheral state. These issues include: the form of the Liberian state, ie: its function, organisation and class character, the relationship between the state and the class structure and the nature of state intervention in the economy. The discussion presented here is intended as a preliminary sketch in what is a largely under-researched area of study, the political economy of 19th century Liberia.

Conceptualising the Peripheral State
Although the present discussion has the primary objective of establishing the specificity of the early Liberian state, it must be rooted in a theoretical framework for analysing the nature of the peripheral state if it is to have scholarly value. We follow Poulantzas in proposing that the urgent task of a theory of the state is 'to grasp the mode in which the class struggle, and especially political struggle and domination, are inscribed in the institutional structure of the state: this must be done in such a way as to explain the differential forms and precise historical transformation of the state'. But what makes this task so difficult is that it calls for the sorts of formulations which pinpoint essential structural similarities in all peripheral societies, without
obsoring the quantitative differences that exist between them.

The state as we understand it is the historically conditioned central system of political authority (including the repressive apparatus and bureaucracy) which secures the conditions for the establishment and reproduction of the dominant mode of production. We start off by seeing the peripheral state as straddling not one but two levels of articulation: between the world capitalist economic system and the peripheral social formation as a whole, and within the social formation. The first level of articulation involves an abstract though simple conceptualisation of the state which seems to capture the relationship between the state, as part of a system of productive relations within the social formation, and the global economic system which structurally determines the organisational form assumed by the productive relations. The peripheral state as a unit of economic reproduction at this level of articulation is required to play a 'central' (interventionist) role in the process of capital accumulation.

The second level of articulation calls for a more complex though less abstract conceptualisation of the peripheral state in the context of its involvement within the social formation in the transformation and reproduction of a wide range of social relations, including political, ethnic and economic relations. It is at this level that the state can be portrayed as the institutionalised form of the class struggle, as well as a unit of political reproduction and social control. By acting as a factor of cohesion over the heterogeneous and fragmented social forces jostling within any social formation, the peripheral state, like all other forms of the state, plays an ideological function in giving legitimacy to the social order as a whole by appearing to be 'relatively autonomous' with regard to the dominant class forces, whose interests it nevertheless tends to represent most. This former function constitutes another aspect of the state's 'central' role. Having outlined rather baldly our theoretical premises on the nature of the peripheral state, we now turn to our analysis of the early Liberian state.

The Foundations of Black Colonisation

In the late 18th century, the coastal areas of present day Liberia comprised a web of subsistence-oriented economies that had been partially entrenched into the global economy through the slave trade, the export of labour (i.e., Africans sold their services on board European vessels in return for merchandise) and increasingly through the exchange of tropical produce for manufactured items in the so-called 'legitimate trade'. These economies were characterised by communal allocation of land, the existence of simple commodity relations in limited spheres and the existence of long-distance trade. By the mid-19th century, the pre-capitalist economies, and to a lesser extent the tribal political structures of the coastal region, had been subjected to an incomplete transformation under the sway of a state apparatus set up to organise the establishment of black American settlements along the coast. The origins of that historical process and the emergence of the Liberian state were rooted in events which took place in the United States during the early 19th century.

American interests in the creation of 'Liberia', as the original settlement at Cape Mesurado was named in 1824, were extraordinarily confused. The primary and initial objective of the so-called 'colonisation' movement which resulted in the foundation of a northern philanthropic organisation, the American Colonisation Society (henceforth ACS), in 1816 was to solve the 'problem' of an increasing free
black population in the United States. Later, colonisation served as a channel for getting rid of an insignificant section of the slave population. It is estimated that altogether some 22,000 black immigrants settled in Liberia in the 19th century. It was proposed by the members of the ACS that black colonisation would fulfil a 'civilising mission' whereby the emigrants would put an end to the slave trade, civilise and Christianise the Africans, and generally involve themselves in creating a 'humane order'. Based on Jeffersonian agrarian ideals, Liberia was envisaged as a collection of small self-sufficient agricultural communities farmed by a black yeomanry.

The ACS stressed from the beginning the economic benefits of establishing a black colony in terms of the trade arrangements with the African population which would secure for American merchants trade then monopolised by Europeans. It was hoped that a campaign to terminate the slave trade would compel Africans to engage in 'honest industry', i.e. trade in tropical produce destined for the United States. The existence of 'legitimate trade' and the slave trade, plus geographical location, were factors which influenced the ACS in its selection of the Liberian coast for black colonisation. But the Society's dreams of building an American commercial empire with backing from the United States Government were dashed by the principles set out in the Monroe Doctrine which restricted US interventionist activities overseas, and by the Society's lack of funds.

Between 1822 and 1855, numerous settlements were founded in Liberia with money raised by the ACS and other colonisation societies. Prior to the 1830s, the US Government maintained an official interest in the colony only as a base from which to carry out an anti-slave trade campaign. In this way, Liberia was used to resettle Africans taken from slavers intercepted by the US Navy off the African coast. Substantial funds approved by the US Congress for this purpose were put at the disposal of the Society's agents in Liberia and thus contributed to the establishment of the colony. The colony's ambiguous relationship with the United States government as neither a colony nor a protectorate later become a contributing factor to its declaration of independence in 1847.

The various objectives embodied in the colonisation movement accounted for the dual character of the colonial state set up in 1822. The use of the term 'state' here derives from the contention that the structure of political authority set up in Liberia by the ACS can be correctly portrayed as a state structure in the sense that the society arrogated political power to itself and acted as the state through an authorised agent in the colony. Firstly, as a unit of societal reproduction, the colonial state was responsible for representing the interests of the settler group as a whole and for organising a peasant or subsistence-based system of production in the settlements. Secondly, the colonial state's involvement in accumulation through trade suggests that it can be understood as a particular form of merchant capital, acting initially in the interest of American merchant capital, and after 1831 (when the ACS was turned into a corporation) acting as an actual form of merchant capital.

Two contradictions which had emerged by the 1830s as a result of the dual function of the state constituted the crucial paradoxes of colonial Liberia and were to provide the internal dynamic of economic growth and political conflict until the latter part of the 19th century. The first paradox was that despite the efforts of the colonial authorities to establish a peasant mode of production in the
The settlers turned to commerce in increasing numbers. The second paradox was that the increasing scope of state intervention in trade during the colonial period coincided with a potential conflict of interest between an aspirant merchant group among the settler population and the colonial state which represented American commercial interests, as well as its own interests as a trading corporation. We can now turn to reach a synoptic understanding of the emergence of the Liberian settler state within the overriding contradictions of the social forces which governed its subsequent development.

The Colonial State, Settlers and Trade
The first requirement for establishing a colony in West Africa was land which the ACS reserved the right to purchase from the African chiefs. The arrival of the black American settlers in the early 19th century and the creation of a series of permanent settlements along the coastal areas of present-day Liberia had a significant impact on the African societies by introducing the alien concept of private property. The conflict over land subsequently led to the early wars between the settlers and the neighbouring African population. In addition to enforcing a system of law and rights within the settlement and supervising its defence, the embryonic colonial state was involved in organising a system of production. Each settler upon arrival was allocated free land consisting of a town lot on which to build a house and five acres for subsistence farming. In addition, in an effort to encourage agricultural production, the colonial authorities provided the settlers with tools, gave advice on farming and offered premiums for agricultural production. But despite these efforts, an increasing number of settlers became involved either part-time or full-time in the import-export trade in which trade in exportable commodities occurred alongside trade in foodstuffs. Exports such as palm oil, cam-wood, gold dust and ivory obtained by the settlers from African traders were shipped to the United States during the colonial period (1822-1838). The consequent neglect of agriculture created a balance of payments deficit in the expenditure of the colonial state so that it required the continued financial support of the ACS. While agricultural production did prosper in individual settlements, it remained low on the whole during the colonial period and surpluses were consumed domestically rather than exported.

Various reasons have been suggested to explain why the settlers rejected the Jeffersonian agrarian ideals advocated by the colonial authorities. These include, among others, the difficulties faced by farmers in securing the proper tools, unfavourable weather conditions, unfamiliarity with methods of tropical cultivation, laziness, plus the psychological implications of farming and manual labour which were associated with slavery. While an adequate explanation must take these factors into consideration, it must nonetheless go further and look first, at the historical origins of the social relations which developed or were in the process of developing in settler society at that time, and secondly, at state-society relations.

An analysis of social relations which developed in colonial Liberian society must necessarily be founded upon an assessment of social relations in American society where the majority of settlers had lived. Such a discussion, however, lies outside the scope of the present paper. Suffice it to say that the social relations which had emerged in 19th century America corresponded to a form of production based on exchange and on the exploitation of wage or slave-labour.
Emigrant society consisted, from the foundation of the colony, of distinct social strata which roughly corresponded to education, occupation and to some extent skin colour. Free-born emigrants, a large number of whom were of mixed race, were usually literate to some extent and had mostly worked as traders and artisans in eastern cities in the United States. A few had accumulated enough money to bring small amounts to Liberia. A small group of West Indians and Creoles from Sierra Leone, who were generally professionally trained, also formed part of the settler elite. Former slaves (the dark-skinned emigrants), who formed a majority after the 1830s, were on the whole illiterate, although some were semi-skilled artisans. Liberia also provided a home for several thousand recaptured Africans. On the whole (perhaps with the exception of the recaptured Africans), the settlers shared a Puritan work ethic that extolled hard work and self-denial since most had emigrated to Liberia determined to achieve what had been denied them in the United States, namely a place in society, freedom and an earned reward. In short, the American settlers were driven by capitalistic imperatives to establish a form of production in the settlements based on exchange.

Once in Liberia, however, they found themselves in a restricted form of social organisation based instead on subsistence-oriented production. Participation in the import-export trade not only yielded quick and sizeable financial returns, but also formed the basis for social divisions within settler society. Thus, while a substantial proportion of the settler population engaged in trade on a small scale, only a tiny number of settlers, mostly mulattoes from the capital city, Monrovia, became dominant in the society by developing an extensive coastal commerce in which small vessels plied the coast to collect exportable produce and to distribute imported manufactured commodities. The Liberian settlers who originated from capitalist societies were concerned with the nature of their relationship with the global economy since it was this which henceforth was to determine the life-chances of every individual in the society. The settler trade acted as a middle-man between African suppliers and European or American merchants. The outward orientation of the settlers, however, conflicted with the efforts of the colonial officials to create a peasant mode of production in the colony. We can now discuss the activities of the colonial state in order to show how the other aspect of its dual nature, as a form of merchant capital, appeared to conflict with the economic interests of the settlers.

As mentioned earlier, the colonial state in Liberia was created as an engine both of settler colonisation and of mercantile expansionism. As interpreted by the colonial officials, settler colonisation implied strictly cultural, rather than political or economic, domination of the African population. Thus the efforts of the colonial state to control the neighbouring African people were subject to clear limits imposed not only by the military weakness of the state (only a small militia had been created), but also by the mandate set by the ACS.

The protectorate relations established with some neighbouring African peoples were based on loose treaties of friendship whereby a given indigenous leader agreed to terminate inter-ethnic hostilities, submit to arbitration by the colonial authorities, ban 'uncivilised' practices (such as the poison ordeal), and co-operate in ending the slave trade. On the other hand, territorial annexation through purchase and outright conquest and the growing expansion of political control over the surrounding African population during the colonial period can largely be
understood as the colonial state's attempt to control trade. This control was essential not only to ensure trade in foodstuffs vital for the colony's survival in the early days but more importantly to ensure the free flow of exportable commodities from the interior of the country (to which the state's jurisdiction did not extend) to the coast. Colonial efforts to control trade were, therefore, directed against the monopoly held by African intermediaries who linked the interior of the country to the coast.

Other factors were also responsible for colonial expansion. For one thing, there was the need for land to establish more settlements, although this factor cannot account for the extensiveness of territorial annexation during the colonial period. Territorial annexation was also used as a way of guaranteeing an American sphere of commercial influence by restricting European trade in the territories claimed by the Liberian colonial state. The colonial state (ie: the ACS) not only represented American commercial interests, but also became directly involved in accumulation by acquiring vessels which engaged in the coastal trade, and by establishing a chain of 'factories' (depots where commodities were stored), hence its characterisation as a form of merchant capital. Besides involvement in trade, the activities of the colonial state further encouraged African participation by, for example, including factory-establishment clauses in land and commercial treaties made with various African tribes. In this way, the colonial state in Liberia acted to entrench rather than modify the existing relations of exchange between the global capitalist economy and the pre-capitalist African economies.

Although the activities of the colonial state served the general interests of the settler group by, for example, appropriating African land to establish settlements, it can be suggested that it remained first and foremost an engine of mercantile expansionism which provided the basis for a conflict of interest between the state and settlers who sought to establish a form of production based on exchange. One area where this conflict was evident concerned the system of apprenticeship whereby Africans were hired out to Americo-Liberian families supposedly as a way of introducing them to Christianity and 'civilisation'. This arrangement which might have provided the settlers with a labour supply for estate production was, however, opposed by the colonial agents in compliance with the Society's policy of co-existence rather than domination of Africans. More importantly, by encouraging free trade in African areas of the territory and undertaking commercial ventures itself, the colonial state undermined the possibility of a settler monopoly over trade. No actual conflict, however, took place between the colonial state and the settlers due to a series of events which occurred outside the colony.

In the 1830s the ACS, finding itself increasingly embroiled in conflicts over political jurisdiction among the several settlements, suffering financial problems and increasingly coming under attack in the United States concerning what was seen as the Society's attempt to acquire an empire, began to seek ways of disengaging itself from the colony. In 1838, it proclaimed Liberia a self-governing commonwealth, comprising a union of all independent settlements with the exception of one (Maryland) which was annexed to Liberia in 1857. Although the Society still maintained some control over the internal affairs of the territory after this period, its political and commercial influence declined substantially largely due to the financial crisis which it faced at home. This allowed the settlers
virtual political autonomy even though they did not declare their sovereignty until 1847.

The Emergence of the Settler State
The formation of the Commonwealth of Liberia brought about significant changes within the state. The reorganisation and expansion of the bureaucratic apparatus after 1839 meant that greater scope for expression was given to the settlers who found in the ‘autonomous’ state a much more apt target for their activities. Although the Governor of the Commonwealth was still appointed by the ACS, legislative powers were now rested in a local legislature. All laws, however, were still subject to the ultimate approval of the Society. The social divisions in settler society earlier described now found expression at the political level. As the wealthiest and most educated group in society, it was the incipient merchant class which gained control over the bureaucratic apparatus of the state.

The relatively unformed nature of class relations in 19th century Liberia meant that more often than not, political alignments were rooted in the field of political practice alone. For example, the growth of regionalism during the 19th century as seen in political antagonism between settlers from Monrovia (the seat of government) and settlers from other localities, reflected the struggle between various elements in the society to gain control over socially necessary resources. Past analyses have stressed the significance of family clusters in settler politics. While it cannot be denied that family interactions played an important role in settler politics during the early as well as more recent period, an analysis which rests solely upon this factor does not give adequate consideration to the emerging economic interest groups. Taking these points into consideration, the term ‘fraction’ will be used in further discussions of social divisions in settler society to stress both the fragmented and unformed nature of class elements and to acknowledge the fact that class interests are not necessarily produced in the productive process alone.

After 1839 the Liberian state urgently needed to establish a source of government revenue following the decline in external financial aid. To this end, it devised several measures including various taxes, fines and levies imposed on the inhabitants of the settlements and a system of harbour and custom taxes imposed on foreign merchants and imports. However, due to the lack of an adequate bureaucracy to enforce tax collection and also to the reluctance of the settler population to pay, internal revenue at most times during the 19th century was negligible.

Another way in which the Liberian state attempted to secure a source of revenue was by controlling the export of African labour from Liberia, a traffic which pre-dated the arrival of the black American settlers. In response to European demands for labour, especially from around the 1850s, the state entered into informal collaborative relations with chiefs who supplied the required labour, while the Liberian state collected a commission on every worker contracted abroad. State intervention into the economy during the 19th century, therefore, did not effectively modify the existing relations of exchange through which pre-capitalist economies within the Liberian social formation were partially entrenched into the capitalist world system. Instead the state inserted itself as a middleman between the global economic system and the pre-capitalist economies in order to sustain its existence as a material entity.
The imposition of harbour and customs taxes, however, raised an international issue over the legitimacy of the Liberian state and its right to act as a sovereign state in view of its ties with the ACS. The refusal of foreign merchants to comply with Liberian law subsequently led to Liberia's declaration of independence in 1847. The diplomatic recognition accorded the Liberian Government by the various European powers was a mandate given to the state to preserve 'law and order' in the territory. This mandate was to provide the point of reference for European attempts toward the end of the 19th century to annex territories claimed by Liberia. But Liberia's international relations were further complicated by the nature of its relationship with the US, which will only be mentioned here in passing. US policy toward the Republic of Liberia from the mid-19th century was based on the recognition of its sovereignty (the US recognised Liberia in 1862, fifteen years after independence was declared) and the concomitant principle of non-interference, although the US professed to having 'particular interest' in Liberia and was prepared to use its good offices to ensure the respect of Liberia's sovereignty by other nations. The US government intervened on numerous occasions in territorial disputes between Liberia and the European powers engaged in the 'Scramble for Africa' during the 19th century. But it would be more correct to perceive US intervention in territorial disputes in terms of Liberia's diplomatic adroitness in using the American 'trump card' in its own interest rather than in terms of American protectionism or benevolence toward Liberia. The US policy of non-interference can largely be attributed to the low level or virtual absence of US commercial interest in Liberia during the latter part of the 19th century and the early 20th century, and the political and strategic unimportance of the country for the US. The 'US connection' only developed after 1926, when the first major American concession (Firestone) was established in Liberia.

To understand Liberia's declaration of independence and subsequent events concerning the control of trade on the Liberian coast, it is necessary to realise that the state was increasingly becoming the instrument of the settler merchant class. After independence, this class gained control over the most overtly political levels of the state apparatus. We can now examine the implications of the class character of the settler state.

After 1849 the harbour tax designed to generate government revenue, was replaced by 'port of entry' laws which had the primary objective of restricting European merchants to certain designated ports in settler controlled areas, effectively giving Liberian merchants a near monopoly of the coastal trade. But although the new laws facilitated the collection of customs duties, the gains achieved in government revenue far under-weighed the costly conflict which the state subsequently became involved in as a result of the refusal of European and African traders to comply. For one thing, in attempting to enforce the 'port of entry' laws by upgrading its military apparatus, the Liberian state was forced to rely on external sources of finance (mostly from the US and Britain), the very situation which it had been attempting to avoid in the first place. Furthermore, because the 'port of entry' laws after 1863 depressed African trade by limiting access to European merchants, the state suffered a crisis of authority and legitimacy in African areas of the territory. The most serious example of this crisis occurred in 1886 when a certain people repudiated Liberian sovereignty, proclaimed their secession from Liberia and placed their district under the protection of Britain which they then called upon the aid in their difficulties with
the Liberian Government. Crises of this nature were suffered by the Liberian state throughout the 19th and and early 20th centuries. Nevertheless, it managed to maintain its nominal hold over the territory, though not without great difficulty. The state lacked the primary requirement for effective domination — a monopoly of force.

The Liberian state after 1847 was confronted with two inter-related crises which derived from its class character. The first, which had to do with the contradiction between state activity in extracting revenue from society and its function of political reproduction, found expression in clashes between the executive and legislative branches of government. Although the state's function as in all class societies was to protect the interests of the dominant class (ie: the settler merchant class), what was at issue in settler politics during the 19th century was the extent to which the state could be used as an instrument to promote class interests without undermining its economic viability as a material entity. After 1849, two presidents favoured a line of policy that would open up trade to foreign merchants so as to increase taxable exports and thereby boost government revenue. But the interests of the merchant class, represented by the legislative branch of government, carried more political weight leading to restrictions on the number of 'ports of entry' which contributed substantially to a decline in revenue. It is somewhat ironic that the decline in government revenue was due to the inability of Liberian merchants to handle the volume of trade relinquished by foreign merchants once the 1863 'port of entry' law, which designated only a few ports, was enforced.

The second crisis which faced the Liberian state in the 19th century threatened the state's relative autonomy in the sense that it was unable to act, or appear to act, on behalf of the settler population at large. This was reflected in the use of state power by the largely mulatto merchant class which controlled the central apparatus to discriminate in various areas of social and political life against the darker-skinned settlers, thus providing grounds for potential antagonism based not only on class interests, but also on race (caste might be a preferable term). But to understand how the state's inter-related crises of 'autonomy' were resolved, it is necessary to examine changes that took place within the settler economy from around the 1850s.

Plantation Production and the Settler State
With the rising overseas demand for tropical produce, notably palm oil and camwood, the Liberian coastal trade flourished especially during the 1850s and 1860s when a small number of Liberian merchants tried to expand their commercial ventures by sailing to ports as far away as New York and Liverpool. The expansion of trade was also evident during this period in the growth of large commercial firms which replaced the individual ventures and simple partnerships typical of earlier years. But from around the middle of the century, as local capital became available from profits earned through trade, and in response to world market demand, an important development took place as Liberian settlers used their local knowledge and commercial connections to build an agrarian export sector. Large plantations grew coffee, cocoa, sugar cane and cotton for the world market, as well as other crops for the domestic market. Past analyses have not paid sufficient attention to the significance of estate production and its implications at the level of the state. Despite the paucity of information, an analysis of the settler plantation economy is crucial to understand how the state's
crisis of 'autonomy' was resolved, and to examine the development of production relations within the Liberian social formation.

While the peasant mode of production operating within the emigrant areas required a form of central organisation to enforce property rights, regulate social intercourse and organise defence, commodity production depended upon access to productive resources as a precondition for the organisation of production. To secure this access, state intervention switched from allocating free land to the settlers to the post-1847 system whereby all unoccupied land in the Republic was claimed as state property which had to be purchased. Thus in settler society, the ownership of land constituted the basis of property rights and provided the framework for private accumulation. Given the low level of technology, the progress of the plantation enterprise depended on the progressive monopolisation of land, a process which was regulated by the state. The other precondition for commodity production required the state to create a labour force. It did this by enforcing a system of apprenticeship which obliged repatriated Africans and indigenous Africans living in settler areas to work for emigrant families for several years. In this way, the larger number of recaptured Africans who arrived in Liberia contributed substantially to the agricultural workforce employed on the plantations. Although it appears that the recaptured Africans made up the larger part of the workforce, poor settlers, family labour and some indigenous African non-apprentices also worked on the plantations. The settler plantation economy encouraged some neighbouring Africans to turn to growing export crops, causing a decline in the amount of labour available. On the basis of this preliminary sketch, we may characterise the plantations as capitalist enterprises producing for the world market on the basis of indentured labour and a monopoly in land. Within this context the role played by the Liberian state during the 19th century in organising the conditions for the reproduction of capital can be recognised.

While the establishment of a productive base controlled by the settler merchant-planter class provided the state with a secure source of revenue until around the 1880s, it had the negative effect of exacerbating the state's crisis of 'autonomy'. This was because plantation production provided an avenue for the emergence of a dark-skinned planter class whose political and social ascendancy was blocked by the mulatto oligarchy which wielded control over the state in order to maintain its racial and class hegemony. This gave rise to a political struggle in the 1860s for control over the state between the dark-skinned and mulatto elements of the merchant-planter class. Events which followed the political victory of the dark-skinned elements of the dominant class in 1869, however, suggest that the struggle for control over the state had far wider implications than an attempt to abolish racial discrimination. Instead, it can be suggested that what was involved within this struggle for state power was the question of the role of the state (i.e. the function it was to play within settler society), and the relationship with the world capitalist system.

It had become increasingly clear to the dark-skinned elements of the dominant settler class that the 'relative autonomy' of the state, in terms of its ability to represent, or appear to represent the interests of all settlers, was crucial in the existing hostile environment. It is therefore significant that the political tactic successfully used by this class fraction to displace the mulatto oligarchy from state power between 1870 and 1877 took the form of populist rhetoric in an
attempt to gain the support of the poor settlers. But in the process of the state assuming a 'relative autonomy' with regard to the dominant class, a fundamental and enduring proposition of Liberian political life was established. The state began to occupy an increasingly 'central' position within settler society in the sense that the dark-skinned elements of the dominant merchant-planter class who controlled the state from the 1870s saw access to the state as a source of private accumulation. In addition, bureaucratic employment was used by the ruling class to bestow rewards and patronage on its political supporters.

The 'centrality' of the state was defined by another factor. Whereas the mulatto oligarchy had made use of the state as an instrument to promote its specific, almost caste-like, interests, in addition to its class interests, the group which took over state power in the 1870s defined a much wider role for the state. It was recognised that some form of accommodation with foreign capital was needed, and in the regard the state would act as an instrument of mediation and negotiation. This function would not only serve the interests of the settler ruling class, but would also contribute to Liberia's general development, the latter being defined in terms of the establishment of a banking and educational system, and the building of railroads into the interior. We can now proceed to examine the implications of the state's 'centrality' within a changing international setting during the latter part of the 18th century.

The End of 'Splendid Isolation': Foreign Capital, Imperialism and the Settler State
In an effort to promote economic development, and partly in response to the declining value of Liberia's foreign trade, the government sought financial assistance from abroad in 1870 by negotiating a loan of $500,000 from a British banking firm. The loan's unfavourable terms (only $350,000 reached Liberia), compounded with gross mishandling of the funds by government officials, contributed to a national debt by the turn of the century of approximately $800,000 which postponed any form of state-sponsored economic development. Thus, Liberia's first venture into the world money market was to prove the turning point in the articulation between the capitalist economic system and the Liberian social formation.

Liberia's inauspicious entry into the international financial system coincided with a period of economic recession within the country which subsequently led to the collapse of both the Liberian coastal trade and the settler plantation economy. The decline of Liberian controlled coastal trade was caused primarily by the decline in demand for Liberian produce overseas, and to a lesser extent by the increase in competition from foreign merchants. Likewise, the collapse of the plantation economy from the late 1880s can be attributed to numerous factors, the most important being the fall in the world market prices due to the worldwide depression during this period and the shortage of labour. This last point is particularly significant because it shows the inability of the Liberian state, due to its inherent weakness, to guarantee the conditions necessary for production.

The decline of the two sectors of the settler economy opened up the way for foreign penetration, particularly in commerce. However, the establishment of European trading houses in Liberia during the last decades of the 19th century was somewhat deterred by Liberian law which barred persons of non-Negroid descent from holding land in the Republic. Even when the law was modified in
1876 to allow foreigners to lease land from 50 to 99 years, the Liberian government still retained the right to abrogate or revoke without compensation all leases. This xenophobic piece of legislation sums up the ambiguous position taken by the Liberian state toward the forces of capital toward the end of the 19th century: on the one hand, it needed to attract foreign capital to boost the sagging economy and to increase government revenue, on the other hand its very survival was threatened by the spread of imperialism in Africa. The ‘Scramble for Africa’ during the last three decades of the century further added to Liberia’s problems by bringing the European powers to the scene to assess whether or not Liberia had effectively carried out the mandate of maintaining ‘law and order’ accorded through diplomatic recognition of its sovereignty.

The absence of state control beyond the coastal region of Liberia, therefore, served as an excuse for the imperialist powers, namely Britain and France, to annex territories claimed by the Liberian state. In this way, Liberia lost more than half of its original territory. In addition to the threat posed by imperialist expansion, the possibility of African rebellion brought pressure on the Liberian state in the early 1900s can therefore be seen as a response to three factors: the exigencies of membership in the international political arena (ie: as the only ‘modern’ state in Africa), the state’s insolvency, and the threat posed to settler primacy by the state’s nominal hold over the African population.

Lessons from the Liberian State
The above analysis suggests that the specificity of the Liberian experience in the 19th century stems from the absence of metropolitan-directed colonisation and the presence of a materially impoverished and militarily weak state structure controlled by an alien ethnic minority which found itself in the constricting grips of the forces of imperialism. The complex experience of 19th century Liberia does, however, illustrate a number of points of more general importance in understanding the nature of the peripheral state in contemporary Africa. We shall mention three of these points.

Firstly, an analysis of the early Liberian state underlines the dangers of attributing an over-determining role to the global economic system. Complex forces, which reflected ethnic, class, and to some extent caste interests, had emerged in 19th century Liberia and were to contribute in an important way to regulating the growth and development of the Liberian state over the next half-century. Moreover, the dangers of portraying too schematically the nature of the peripheral state as a tool in the hands of imperialism are clearly shown by the failure of the Liberian state in the 19th century to guarantee in any significant sense (and over a long period of time) the conditions necessary for primitive capitalist accumulation, not to mention even the conditions required for other forms of capitalist accumulation. The early Liberian state thus represents par excellence the ‘unsteady state’ (to borrow Saul’s term), unable to fulfil either the ideological functions of a state (eg: failing to create a sense of nation and lacking legitimacy in the eyes of the dominated groups in society) or to service imperialism’s most basic interests by maintaining law and order and coping with the socially disruptive articulation of capitalist and indigenous modes of production which lay at the heart of the settler situation. As with all peripheral states, the unpredictability of the early Liberian state also hinged upon the state being a target for the activities of class elements, who saw the state as a potential instrument for the advancement of their own interests and concerns, ethnic
interests being merely one of several.

The second point brought out by our discussion of settler society in 19th century Liberia concerns the need to go beyond economistic approaches to class analysis in peripheral societies, where social elements are not yet firmly rooted in the production process, and to accord greater explanatory power to ethnic, regional and other affiliations and alignments. Moreover, as the case of the 19th century Liberia clearly shows, this approach is essential to understanding the nature of the state and the vagaries of politics in peripheral societies.

Finally, the Liberian case stresses the importance of the notion of 'centrality' in analysing the peripheral state. In the Liberian setting 'centrality' had a triple significance: the state, as the only systematic set of social relations at the territorial level, was the focus of contradictions emanating from capitalism's articulation with the indigenous modes of production while acting as the major factor of cohesion in settler society and as the instrument of settler domination, and at the same time serving the interests of certain class elements. The approach of our discussion has been to fill gaps in past analyses of 19th century Liberia by developing an analysis of the Liberian state which relates complex factors operating at the economic level to their direct and indirect consequence at the level of the society as a whole.

By drawing on the current Marxist debate about the nature of the peripheral state, this article has attempted to describe the transformation of the Liberian state in the 19th century from a form of merchant capital to an instrument of class and ethnic domination. In general terms, the emergence of the settler state during this period, while disrupting in a significant manner the traditional African societies on the Liberian coast, did not effectively modify their relations with the global capitalist system which were based on the exchange of tropical produce and a traffic in labour. The Liberian state merely took advantage of existing relations of exchange to ensure for itself a source of revenue.

The development of a plantation economy and a prosperous coastal trade during the 19th century illustrated how the dominant class in settler society, whose actions were determined by capitalist imperatives, were effectively able to use state power to further their class interests, even at the expense of European merchants. But the decline of both sectors of the settler economy in the last decades of the century merely underlined the relations of independence which linked the Liberian social formation to the world capitalist economy. By the turn of the century, dependency had taken on another form as evident in the size of Liberia's external debt accumulated on the international credit system. Added to this economic dependence was Liberia's status in the international arena during the Scramble for Africa as a 'sub-imperialist' nation which put pressure on the Liberian settler state to expand its authority into the interior of the country.

Bibliographic Note
This article is derived from my unpublished M.Phil dissertation 'From settler to neo-colonial state: An analysis of the historical development of the Liberian state, 1822-1964' (University of Sussex, 1981). The title of the article, 'The love of liberty brought us here', is taken from the motto on the official seal of the Republic of Liberia which dates back to 1847.

On the peripheral state, see: H. Alavi "The State in Post-Colonial societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh" New Left Review, No.74, 1972; E.A. Brett, "Relations of Production, the state


Gender and Class in a Nigerian Industrial Setting

Renee Pittin

This paper examines the relationship between female and male workers in a factory in Zaria. We argue that one of the factors inhibiting the organisation of women as members of the working class is the gender discrimination women face from male co-workers. Although gender subordination is used and transformed by systems of class exploitation, it is often perceived by women as being of greater immediacy than class oppression. This is partly because men utilise gender discrimination to gain or maintain for themselves positions of relative privilege and power. Thus women workers often find themselves alienated from their male co-workers, while the men fail altogether to understand women's reluctance to become involved with or participate actively in what women see as organisations catering to male interests, such as the union.

Through an examination of a series of events, opinions and impressions, we shall try to establish why a woman worker would say, and many of her fellow workers agree, that 'discrimination is not direct from management, but rather from ... male co-workers' (Women in Nigeria Newsletter).

EMCON (Nigeria) Ltd.
The research in progress upon which this paper is based is concerned with the women workers at EMCON, the Electricity Meter Company (Nigeria) Ltd. in Zaria. We are using a variety of research techniques, primary among which are in-depth interviews, mainly with women workers, to elicit detailed information concerning women's perceptions of their present jobs, their employment expectations, the quality and types of relationships which exist between co-workers, male and female, between shop-floor workers and senior staff, male and female, and the kinds of problems which women encounter at the workplace. The latter includes women's assessments of the organisational structures which exist to deal with their problems and women's involvement in and attitudes towards their union. We are listening to women's suggestions as to how their working conditions and conditions of service could be improved. We have also interviewed members of the past and present union executive and representatives of management who have provided their own perspectives concerning the problems which beset the company, staff relationships and prospects for the future.

EMCON is a very young Zaria-based company created to supply electric meters and circuit breakers for NEPA's (Nigerian Electric Power Authority) expanding
electrification programme. The company was brought into existence following a 1976 contract agreement between the Federal Military Government and the Swiss technical partners, Landis and Gyr. The Federal Government is the major EMCON shareholder, with 80 per cent of the total company shares: shares are divided between the Federal Ministry of Industries (60 per cent of the total shares) and NEPA (20 per cent); the remaining 20 per cent shareholding is controlled by Landis and Gyr.

In accordance with the contract agreement, EMCON is engaged in both manufacture and assembly of electrical equipment. Sixty-five per cent of the components required for circuit breakers are manufactured at the Zaria plant, as are meter components. The physical layout and organisational structure of the factory are designed to carry out and integrate effectively the two production processes.

EMCON was formally commissioned on 1 September 1982. Building at the site had begun in 1979 and the first production workers were hired and their training started the same year. With the completion of the factory and the installation of the machinery, and after several months of test production, the company moved into full production in 1982. Since that time, however, the effects of austerity, with the limiting of import licences, the denial of letters of credit, and consequent non-availability of necessary raw materials, have severely affected EMCON, with heavy cuts in production, compulsory leave and half-time work schedules. EMCON’s difficulties have been exacerbated by the actions of its only customer, NEPA.

EMCON’s position should be enviable: it has an assured marked, with the purchase of its entire output guaranteed by NEPA. But this blessing has become a major headache. Although NEPA collects EMCON’s products, it is extraordinarily sluggish about paying for them: by December 1983, NEPA owned EMCON almost two million Naira! Payment of workers’ salaries was delayed and production dropped to virtually nothing. In spite of these difficulties, no worker has lost his or her job because of the economic situation; however, few workers among the rank-and-file received their full wages in 1983.

As of November 1983, EMCON employed 350 people, including 103 women. EMCON, the major industrial employer of women in Zaria, is unusual among profit-oriented Nigerian industries in that the women are employed as permanent workers, receive good wages and benefits, and equal payment with men for equal levels of seniority, training and skills (although not always, as we show below, equal opportunities). However, though ostensibly equal with their male co-workers, gender categorisation is employed in numerous ways to subordinate women in relation to men. In practice, gender discrimination is a basic feature of the workplace and gender subordination is virtually built into the system.

**The Process and Practice of Gender Discrimination**

Ranking and stereotyping by gender are characteristic of most situations. As Whitehead has put it:

... where there are hierarchical relations ... gender categories are assigned to places within them so as not to contradict the 'fundamental' hierarchy of men above women which occurs in gender relational situations.
More specifically within the capitalist labour process, Elson and Pearson have pointed out that the ‘giving of orders is... a male prerogative, while the role of women is... the carrying out of orders’. Capitalist relations of production become ‘bearers of gender’. In EMCON, this aspect of gender hierarchy is pervasive: almost one-third of the employees are women, and nine-tenths of the intermediate and senior staff are men. Whilst this is to some extent explicable in terms of men’s previously greater access to training — especially technical education — and experience, it is not a sufficient explanation. For the fact is that qualified women have been passed over for further training and promotion to supervisory positions.

While formal practices such as those of discrimination in promotion contribute to gender hierarchy, there are numerous other symbolic ways of reinforcing and reaffirming gender relations. Thus, for example, one of the EMCON foremen insists that the women workers in his unit sweep the work area each day. He says it is work ‘meant for women’ and the men in the unit support him, insisting that they cannot sweep, they ‘don’t know how’. In fact, no production personnel should sweep any floor in the factory: cleaners, women and men, are employed for that purpose. In this case, the foreman’s demand requires women to remember their place — just in case they might have forgotten.

This process of gender subordination is rendered easier still, or perhaps is predicated upon, some of the commonly-found characteristics of the female labour force in developing countries, which reflect also the EMCON situation: youth, a minimum level of secondary education and lack of previous work experience. As Gomez and Reddock have pointed out:

... the subordination traditionally practised as ‘respect for elders’ is combined with that of women in ‘respect for men’ and the result is a factory situation which can be easily controlled and disciplined and where ‘management’s prerogative’ is maintained.

However, the system is not perfect, and particular events and incidents may sensitise women to the realities and the limitations of their situation, and the possible alternatives. An analysis of the events surrounding a recent promotion exercise at EMCON demonstrates the processes through which gender discrimination can be and has been effected, the responses this action elicited, and the likely effects of the process and practice on future gender-differentiated decisions which directly affect women’s opportunities.

It is evident that there are many different forms of gender discrimination. One of the most commonly recognised is that which has been described as statistical discrimination. This includes both wage discrimination (equally productive men and women being paid different wages) and employment discrimination (a smaller number of women being employed in an occupation or industry than would occur without discrimination, or inferior job and promotional opportunities being available to women). The present case involves the latter form of discrimination: better job and promotional opportunities are given to men than to women.

A training programme was organised within one EMCON department in order to fill a small number of vacant intermediate staff positions and to improve the technical skills of a number of lower-level workers, some of whom would be promoted on the successful completion of the programme. Names were submitted to the section head for consideration by the acting supervisor in at
least one of the two sections involved. This list included the names of women workers; the lists of approved trainees for both sections included none. No women were accepted in the training programme, although the two sections contained, at the time, nearly half the women shopfloor workers employed at EMCON. The workforce of one section included 13 women and 15 men; all the women had been hired before 14 of the men and therefore had seniority. The workforce of the other section was composed of 27 women and 35 men. The first group of workers hired in the unit included 14 of these women, and five of the men. Thus, this group had seniority in terms of length of service, although limited education would have rendered some of these workers (women and men) ineligible for the present training programme. As it turned out, seniority was not relevant, gender was.

Inclusion on the training programme meant far more in 1983 than might originally have been anticipated. The likelihood of improved job status and pay was of course to be considered. However, at the time of the programme, EMCON was in the throes of a period of compulsory leave and half-time employment. In some units, only the trainees worked throughout the lean months and thus only trainees received their full pay packets: many workers received nothing at all.

It is instructive to follow the process of trainee selection in one of the sections which we knew well in order to appreciate the way in which gender discrimination could and did occur. Two women had been recommended for the trainee programme. They were the first two to have been employed. When the list of approved trainees was posted, the foreman of this section queried the section head about the fate of his own list of nominees. In his view, women should be given the chance to train: if they failed they could, after all, be removed from their new positions. The response of the section head, however, was totally negative. He said that no woman was capable of holding a senior position in the unit. In his view, the chief operators (the positions to which the trainees aspired) were required to do odd jobs and mechanical repairs and that women could not or would not do these. The women, he said, did not have the technical ability or training necessary for the job and were not ‘strong enough to control people’. He alleged that they were not interested in competing or achieving, that they were too proud, ‘moving with Alhajis and Mercedes’, to be responsive to the needs of the company. He did not feel that it was necessary to promote women in order to improve workers’ morale. The company was not a ‘social experiment’ which would require such promotions. Yet this unit had the lowest morale and the lowest productivity in the factory and the women had indicated in every company survey that they felt that their opportunities had been too limited. The section head’s response was typical: as Safilios-Rothschild has pointed out, gender stereotypes:

can distort supervisors’ perceptions of women’s performances and belittle their achievements in comparison to men’s. . . . because managers and supervisors stereotypically view women workers as less competent and dependable and as greater risks, they tend to have lower expectations of them and they tend not to assign them challenging and demanding duties that would give them the experience and self-confidence women need for higher positions.

Given the organisational hierarchy at EMCON, this section head was single-handedly able to thwart women’s promotion through his resort to and acceptance of all the tired old prejudices about women workers. As Sloane put it: ‘the
exclusion of women from employment (or advancement) means that there is no disconfirming experience. Women cannot prove their working abilities, or their capacities for leadership and achievement, for they are not permitted to demonstrate them. Moreover, there is no relevant enforceable legislation (outside the Constitution) in Nigeria to force non-gender-based hiring and promotions, nor are there affirmative action programmes to protect women workers and encourage their progress. Through misconceptions based on stereotyping, women’s aspirations are limited in the workplace, as they so frequently are outside it. Stereotyping reduces women’s chances to get wage employment, because of less incentive or opportunity to acquire education or job-related training, and this process is then reinforced in employers’ or supervisors’ use of stereotypes to downgrade women further.

Their exclusion from training demoralised the women, who lacked any effective formal means to express their anger and their fears, or to seek redress for their grievances. The present union had not yet been elected, and union affairs were in the hands of a caretaker committee. Women could not therefore complain to the union, although it is extremely unlikely that they would have done so for reasons that will be discussed below. There was no women’s organisation in the company to which the women could have turned, nor did the women unite to confront management or other senior staff. Although some of the workers suggested this, they did not receive sufficient support to initiate action, owing to the divisions already present among the women workers.

Rather, the response was left to the individual workers, and was utterly ineffective, as such unorganised and isolated protests often are. A number of women in the unit went individually to the foreman to find out why they had not been selected. They were in turn referred to the section head who, as the person directly responsible for eliminating them, simply deflected their enquiries and protests, one by one.

Some of the women brought their complaints to the Personnel Manager. Training programmes, however, had by that time been removed from the control of Personnel, a change which was resented by the Personnel Manager, and which he felt was deleterious to the interests of the workers because of the lack of coordination between Personnel and Production in the conduct of training programmes. According to him, the women told him that they had been cheated and were not being given a fair chance. Nevertheless, he did not formally query his colleagues’ decisions although workers say that he did notify the union representatives, so that they might act on the absence of women, and the preponderance of recently hired workers among trainees when the new union executive was elected. The union did not respond.

The discrepancies between the lists of trainees submitted at shop floor and supervisory levels were not scrutinised at any other level, as there were no structures for so doing. At that time suggestions rose up the hierarchy, and decisions flowed downward; now the foreman, section head and head of department meet to discuss promotions.

Having been rejected, the women withdrew into rationalisations and ostensible lack of concern. Some did not bother to register their dissatisfaction with the section head, saying that they would not remain at EMCON forever, or that when they are accepted into any school they will leave EMCON, and that
therefore this setback is not all that important. According to some of their co-
workers, a couple of the married women said that they were not too concerned
about lack of promotion, because they were not dependent on their salaries for
sustenance.

Thus gender discrimination had been accepted, or rationalised away. Although
few women said so explicitly, it would appear that they had recognised, or even if
they did not fully accept, that men would be trained and promoted before or
instead of themselves and that there was no longer any point in protesting. There
the matter would have rested were it not for the promotion, only weeks later, of
women in two units in another department. One unit was composed entirely of
women, except for one man, but the other unit which was originally entirely
female included eight women and five men. Two women were made ‘foremen’,* and
three women and one man were promoted to chief operator.

Then the protests began again, with renewed vigour. But there were neither
procedures through which, or people with whom, such grievances might be taken
up. The women of the units within which no women had been promoted went to
their foreman to protest, but received no satisfaction. Those who had complained
earlier were told that the training programme was over anyway, and that there
was nothing that could be done for them now. Those who had been silent during
the first promotion exercise were asked why they hadn’t complained at the time.
Was it only jealousy over their fellow women workers’ promotions that prompted
a response now?

The women did not go to the union, which they felt was ineffective and
unresponsive to the needs of the workers. And, indeed, the present union
executive has said that ‘promotion and training are not the union’s business’.
They did not blame the administration which, they felt, had done no more than
act on the advice of intermediate and senior management. Thus, the blame for
the present situation had come to rest squarely on the women themselves, since
they had not organised to defend their interests when the need arose.

We have repeatedly noted that women do not generally seek recourse to the
union in dealing with their grievances. The relation between the union, the
workers in general, and the women, requires closer examination, in order to
understand the reasons for this.

Gender, Class and the Union
All EMCON junior workers, ie: the vast majority of the workforce, are dues-
paying members of PEREWU, the Precision Electrical and Related Equipment
Workers Union, which has represented EMCON workers since the union was
first organised in the company in July 1981. The majority of members are not
active in union affairs. The present executive is seen by many men and women
workers as a mouthpiece for management decisions, unable or unwilling to
represent effectively the workers’ interests. Interviews carried out in November
1983 with men and women workers elicited responses condemning the union such as:

*The gender bias of the title ‘foreman’ bothers some of the women; one asked to be
addressed as ‘lady foreman’. The problem will solve itself, with a new set of work designations
soon to be introduced: ‘supervisor’ replaces ‘foreman’.
The union is not doing much.
The union is weak, and doesn’t want management to blame them.
The union executive only talk of their own problems, not of the other workers.
The union know our problems but haven’t done anything about them. But they sometimes help the workers.
Sometimes the union fulfils their promises.
The union used to work, and follow grievances up, but don’t do so as much now.
I brought my grievance (concerning maternity benefits, and breast-feeding time) to the union four months ago, and the president said they would look into it. I haven’t heard anything yet.
The present executive are just fighting for themselves.

Thus, at present, there is a crisis of confidence in the union executive, and in its responsiveness to its constituency. The union’s present performance is criticised by both men and women, and few of the workers feel that the union will act on their grievances. Women, however, feel in addition that their interests are secondary to men’s as far as the union executive is concerned:

- The union do more for men; they don’t look after women.
- The union don’t do anything for women.
- Women have problems, but the union doesn’t take action.

It is certainly true that the union has done very little in the past to deal with problems women face as women. Members of the first union executive admit that problems specific to women were not pursued with much dedication. According to them, this was in part because at that time few women were married or pregnant and questions of maternity leave did not seem as pressing as they do now. The lack of concern over these issues, however, is directly attributable to the fact that men are not affected by them and that the male executive has failed to impart equal legitimacy to women’s claims. Rather, grievances generally tend to be telescoped into demands of more immediacy to the male executive, such as higher wages or other monetary benefits. Thus the male executive argue that women benefited equally with men when general concessions are gained from management. One such ‘unisex’ concession is the motorcycle loan: more than a hundred men and two women had availed themselves of this. In one area at least, the union has been gender-blind. It has fought equally to protect women and men from intended dismissal or suspension.

The present executive which, in spite of its poor record in general, has recently made some gains for women, complains that women do not bring their grievances to them (a statement contradicted by some women) and that therefore they cannot act. At a time when both women and men lack confidence in the union’s ability to help workers in general, and given the union’s previous lack of interest in dealing with women’s grievances, it is hardly surprising that women’s involvement in union affairs and in seeking union support is nominal. Women’s union participation, and their mobilisation as union activists, is relatively low throughout the world. Married women lack the time to pursue union activities, and many women feel that the union is not of immediate relevance to them. Elson and Pearson have noted that:

... workers’ organisations have failed to recognise and build into their structure the specificity of gender. (This) failure means that in practice they have tended to represent male workers. In addition, the specific problems that concern women as a subordinated gender are often problems which (are) not easy for conventional forms of trade unions to tackle.

Nevertheless, if trade unions are ever to be responsible to the needs of their
female members, it is important for women to become active in the union. They must do so to influence policy and to represent to the executive those women's grievances which the women affected might be unwilling to bring to union men or which they might not even recognise as legitimate.

Few women have come forward to participate in union activities or to stand for union elections at EMCON. Women seem to have made stronger political statements in resigning from their EMCON union posts* than in filling them. Women have been urged to stand for election, but few have done so, either because of constraints of time and demands of family members, or through lack of self-confidence, or because the union does not have direct importance to them. This lack of female representation is evident up to the highest level of union organisation: only one of the 146 executives in the National Labour Congress is a woman. Women are only tangentially represented in the union, and if their interests are in conflict with those of their male co-workers, then there is need for a stronger gender-based presence and organisation to act for women's interests in the face of clear gender discrimination.

Towards Gender Solidarity
EMCON women have noted the need for gender-based groupings in the company; these run the gamut from sports clubs to self-help organisations, to a women's caucus, to a women's union to represent women in relation to management and male co-workers. At present, however, no company organisation represents or exists specifically for women, and the social cohesiveness which can be engendered through the recognition and discussion of common interests and problems barely exists. Indeed, in some areas relationships between women are more divisive than unifying, as in the factory floor/administration cleavage.

A whole package of distinctions separates the women working in the administration block (as secretaries, receptionists, etc.) from the rank and file on the factory floor. The women in the administration block work under better conditions than their sisters in the factory, much to the latter's annoyance and envy. The administration women are never obliged to work on shift, are not required to wear uniforms (a cotton jacket over one's street clothes) and they do not have their movements constantly checked and their break times counted to the minute. Because of their close association with management, they seem to be promoted more easily than their assembly line co-workers and job security is better. While women on the shop floor were being laid off for months at a time, the administration women (and all the senior staff) kept right on working. This situation illustrates the problem of women attempting to organise across class lines.

The administration women see the shop floor women (excluding their friends) as 'rough', and have even forbidden their use of the administration block toilets. This facile division is particularly ironic inasmuch as the majority of the shop floor women are secondary school leavers, while the administration women have pursued commercial and secretarial courses. The factory women point out that,

In one case the female union official was astounded and appalled to discover that a union delegation had gone to management to protest against her promotion; she resigned from her union post immediately. In the other case, the woman resigned over the final composition of the union executive; she felt she could not work with them.
given present austerity, they must remain where they are, but that they are no less secondary school graduates with high aspirations, and higher paper qualifications than the administration block women can claim.

Yet another dichotomy exists between married and unmarried women. Even in terms of the organisations proposed by the women, married women are always distinguished from single women in terms of their responsibilities, behaviour, knowledge and wisdom. There is, in fact, constant reference in discussions to women’s domestic roles and expectations. Hunt suggests that a woman who has taken on the double burden of marriage and employment, and coped with it, may have ‘more confidence in her ability to defend her own objectives’ and may make more assertive demands in the workplace than her male counterparts, or unmarried sisters.

A positive and concerted effort to organise as women would be a bridge linking the various categories of women workers, providing a basis for networks of solidarity within and outside the factory, providing support and assistance to women in work and non-work related situations, and providing the expertise and impetus to challenge the subordination of women. The employment of large numbers of women in industry brings shop floor women together not just as workers but as a gender, thus creating a site for the struggle of women workers as members of a gender as well as members of a class. Such a struggle will not automatically occur — new forms of organisation must be consciously built — but the conditions for it are present. The struggle cannot be judged in purely instrumental terms, but rather in terms of the way it develops women’s capacities for self-determination. As Elson and Pearson have argued:

The development of conscious co-operation and solidarity between women on the basis of recognition of their common experience of gender subordination is more important a goal than any particular improvement . . . (or) reform . . . Lasting gains depend on the relationships built up between women themselves.

The women of EMCON have already been sensitised to the practice and the effects of gender discrimination through their own work experience and through their daily lives. So wary of the many manifestations of gender discrimination have the EMCON women become, that for some, gender has become an operative response in their day-to-day work roles. They are more concerned about oppression from their male co-workers and (male) lower echelon management than they are about class discrimination and subordination which affects both men and women. The union has done little for women, and work relations tend to perpetuate, in numerous ways, the unequal status of women. If working women are to gain their rights, they must fight for them through their organisations and activities.

Towards Workers’ Solidarity
Women should also organise and mobilise on the basis of class affiliation. However, such participation should be based on gender equality in policy making, work allocation and leadership. Gender subordination, found in every society, can be and is exploited by the capitalist system. Once new forms of subordination are created, in terms of unequal wage structure, unequal employment, unequal security, they become difficult to challenge, and take on an autonomy of their own.

Although women are a large part of the EMCON work force, they are
marginalised in union activities and decision-making, as in the business of the company in general, a set-up arising largely from pre-existing gender relations. The present union executive has stated that 'good working relations' now exist between women and the union executive although women 'are not bold enough to speak out'. For women to become more active and more confident, and able to relate equally with their co-workers in the union, they must challenge the many barriers of gender subordination, both ideologically and in terms of the material oppression under which they labour. While not minimising the importance of class solidarity as an organising principle, and the significance of class in effecting both female and male oppression, one must come to terms with the reality of gender subordination within the class framework.

If men do not fight with women for women's interests as part of the class struggle, then women will tend to focus on gender discrimination alone, and not see its relationship to class exploitation. These problems must be recognised, confronted, and overcome. As Mackintosh has stated:

... the working class is already materially divided, women's subordination being embedded in a sexual division of labour relatively favourable to men ... far from being divisive, to struggle against those divisions is necessary if the divisions are to be overcome.

Author's Note
The research upon which this paper is based is being carried out largely by the author with the able assistance of a research associate whose knowledge of working conditions and staff interaction provides a continuing picture of the crises, successes and daily exchanges which make up day-to-day life. At the time of writing, about half the women employees of the factory had been interviewed. Other aspects of the research, such as the time-allocation budgets of women workers and an analysis of women's grievances and union response with regard to maternity benefits, time off for breast-feeding etc, are not treated in this paper. The paper was first presented to the Nigerian Association of Sociologists and Anthropologists National Conference on the Role of Labour in National Development, Jos, January 1984.

Several of the EMCON women are members of Women in Nigeria, an organisation created to fight against gender and class oppression in Nigeria and to ameliorate the conditions of Nigerian women. The organisation is composed of women from all over Nigeria and from all levels of society. (Ed. WIN's manifesto was published in ROAPE 27/28, 1983. A WIN Press Release is published in this issue).

Bibliographic Note

TANZANIA: THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPLOYMENT ACT 1983 — A DESPERATE MEASURE TO CONTAIN A DESPERATE SITUATION

Tanzania’s economic performance in the 1980s has been the worst since independence in 1961. Decline in real GDP was recorded for the first time in 1981 and by 1983 no recovery had been recorded. In 1981 the aggregate value of output from productive sectors declined from shillings 5,677 million in 1980 to 5,019 million in 1981 and 4,459 million in 1982. The 1980s also witnessed a serious shortage of virtually everything, whether locally produced or imported, from food products to fuel and other consumer goods. A government statement on the shortage of fuel lamented that ‘the nation is going through a critical period in its history’, attributing the fuel shortage to ‘the unavailability of adequate foreign exchange to purchase the entire fuel needs of the nation’ (Daily News, 25 June 1983). In 1983, for the first time since independence, food was rationed.

Faced with these difficulties the state has resorted more clearly than ever before to the employment of coercion to generate production, especially agricultural. Enforcement of agricultural bye-laws has been revived and the Party Secretary General has warned that peasants ignoring agricultural ‘advice’ will face legal action: ‘We want Party directives on the types of crops to be grown in a given area to be followed scrupulously’ (Daily News, 26 June 1983). Local government tax which was abolished in 1969 has been re-introduced (Local Government Finances Act, No.9 of 1982), and vagrancy laws have been tightened. For example, a 1983 Penal Code amendment expanded categories of ‘idle and disorderly persons’ to include:

a. Any able-bodied person who is not engaged in any productive work and has no visible means of subsistence;

b. Any person employed under lawful employment of any description who is, without any lawful excuse, found engaged in a frolic of his own at a time he is supposed to be engaged in activities connected or relating to the business of his employment.

However, much more significant was the enactment of a Human Resources Deployment Act (No.6 of 1983) (hereinafter referred to as the Deployment Act) aimed at compelling all able bodied persons to be engaged in ‘productive work’ as defined by the state. Before coming to that, I propose to trace briefly the historical roots of vagrancy in Tanzania so that we can assess the Deployment Act in a clear historical perspective.
The Roots of Vagrancy
The problems of vagrancy in Tanzania can be traced to the transformation of the pre-capitalist social formation into peripheral capitalism during the colonial period. During the early years of colonial rule there were severe problems of recruiting labour for settler plantations, mining and processing industries. The colonial regime had to resort to forced labour in certain instances and to impose taxes to achieve commodity production. Official records clearly indicate the absence of vagrancy in the early years of colonialism. The 1923 Police Annual Report indicated that there were only two cases of vagrancy in that year, and both of them involved Europeans. The Commissioner of Police conceded that 'there is practically no such thing as a native vagrant'. In his 1924 Police Annual Report, the Commissioner bitterly attacked European vagrants in the colony:

There is no doubt that there are several worthless Europeans in the territory who are on the verge of destitution, and simply exist by wandering about the country in search of big game. The special Governor's licence issued during the year for the destruction of plantation raiding elephants have certainly kept alive a certain number of these worthless scamps, most of whom have come to their present economic condition entirely by being victims of drink . . . The persons with whom I am now dealing . . . are those who entered the territory in the early days after the war, and have gradually drifted lower and lower.

Most of these people were subsequently deported to Europe and South Africa. However, as capitalist relations of production developed the problem of vagrancy started affecting the local population, especially in Dar-es-Salaam. The immediate cause then was the world-wide economic depression of the early 1930s. A census of the city taken in July 1931 revealed that there were 1,876 people out of employment, and by 1939 the number had reached 4,300 which was about 33 per cent of the African population (TNA file 21216). By the 1950s the penal provisions in the Master and Native Servant Ordinance used to compel native servants to work for their masters had become superfluous and were accordingly repealed. Changes in the social formation had created a class of wage labourers whose survival depended on nothing else but their labour power. They needed no state compulsion in order to work. The Police Annual Report for 1957 touched for the first time on the problem of unemployment. The Commissioner of Police acknowledged that 'the economic and social conditions of the people are undergoing rapid changes and there is a strong urge for Africans to leave their tribal areas for the towns'. In the final year of British colonial rule over Tanganyika the Commissioner of Police reported that:

With the rapid change in the economic and social conditions of the people, there is an ever-increasing population drift from the discipline and security of tribal areas to the towns. This leads to new problems for the Force. The number of petty thefts, particularly in urban centres, continue to increase (Police Annual Report, 1960, p.1).

The post-colonial Tanzanian state inherited the problem of vagrancy which was to grow in seriousness every succeeding year. The population in urban areas has been increasing fast. Thus, whereas the urban population stood at 685,547 people in 1957 or 5.6 per cent of the population, the number had reached two million in 1978 or 15 per cent of the population (Uhuru, 6 July 1983). It is projected that if the trend goes unchecked the number will reach 10 million or 50 per cent of the population by the year 2000. The post-colonial state also inherited a host of vagrancy statutes ranging from the Penal Code provisions on 'idle and disorderly persons' and 'rogues and vagabonds' to the Deportation Ordinance and the
Townships (Removal of Undesirable Persons) Ordinance. Court orders for the resettlement of 'vagrants' in rural areas, however, proved far from being effective in arresting the problem.

In another attempt to check vagrancy in the late 1960s the government introduced a policy of 'education for self-reliance'. This aimed at preparing youths for rural communal life after primary or secondary school since only less than 10 per cent go beyond the seven years primary school education, and out of those only 20 per cent manage to obtain a post-secondary school education. It is more than 15 years since this policy was adopted and it has borne no fruits. Urban areas still offer better opportunities than the villages, and school leavers still flock to the towns in search of a better life. Peasant farming and village life is generally associated with failure. The Tanzanian peasantry still relies on very backward agricultural production methods. Animal-drawn implements are applied to only 10 per cent of cultivated land and tractors to only 5 per cent. The rest (85 per cent) depends on the hand hoe (*Daily News*, 28 June 1983). The prices paid to producers of agricultural commodities have not kept up with the rate of inflation, and adverse climatic conditions continually put the peasant in a very unenviable position. Under these conditions it would be wishful thinking to expect school leavers to join voluntarily their families in the rural areas.

Since the late 1960s the state has periodically resorted to repatriation of the unemployed to rural areas. In most cases this was prompted by increases in the crime rate, especially robberies and burglaries, although the sisal and tea plantations with their perpetual labour shortages benefited from such 'operations'. The most significant operation was carried out in 1976 in which the government set aside 10 million shillings for the resettlement of unemployed Dar-es Salaam residents in villages adjoining the city. However, as was the case in all the previous repatriations, most of the repatriated people returned to the city immediately after receiving their food rations and some cash to begin a new life. Some women were given 'lifts' back to the city only a few hours after reaching their supposedly new homes. All in all, the venture was a total failure.

**The 1983 Human Resources Deployment Act**

In the context of these previous measures to control the urban unemployed the Deployment Act of 1983 was not a radical departure from the past. Seen in the light of diminishing food and cash crop production in the late 1970s and early 1980s in a country which is predominantly agricultural, the government's decision to pass such an Act can be understood, albeit as a desperate measure to contain a desperate situation. The preamble to the Act states that it is 'to make provision for the establishment of a machinery designed to regulate and facilitate the engagement of all able bodied persons in productive work', and for its legitimacy it cites both the Constitution and the Arusha Declaration. The responsibility of overall planning for human resources deployment is vested in the Labour Minister, assisted by the Labour Commissioner, and advised by a National Human Resources Deployment Advisory Committee whose members the Minister appoints. However, the actual task of implementing the programme is vested in the local authorities.

All Tanzanians are to be registered at local government level with all relevant particulars for this exercise. The registration is to be followed by the issuance of labour identification cards on top of the usual employers identification card. The
crucial provision requires the resettlement of unemployed urban dwellers in their villages of origin. The harmonization of vagrancy laws with the Deployment Act can be seen in the following provision:

The Minister shall... make such arrangements as will provide for a smooth and co-ordinated transfer or any other measure which will provide for the rehabilitation and full deployment of persons chargeable with or previously convicted of being rogues and vagabonds under section 177 of the Penal Code (section 25).

The above also applies to all categories of people convicted of being ‘idle and disorderly’ under section 176 of the Penal Code.

Each region is supposed to list categories of lawful and unlawful activities. Dar-es-Salaam region illegalised the entire ‘informal’ (or ‘hidden’) sector. Thus unlicensed motor mechanics, shoe-shine boys, hawkers, petty traders, tailors, barbers, etc., are treated in the same way as ‘loiterers’. It should be noted that many of these people are totally self-reliant, hard-working and enterprising. Some are better off than salaried employees. These people were especially bitter about the government’s decision to marginalise and criminalise them. Here are typical reactions of some of those interviewed by a *Sunday News* reporter (2 October 1983).

1. Wakati Rajabu, a groundnuts vendor (40 years old, married with six children), explained that he buys groundnuts at a wholesale price, roasts them and resells at retail price, thereby making a profit of shillings 150 per day. Asked why he did not do farming, he replied:

   If I grow crops what would I be looking for; food and money — alright? What is the difference if I get the same through groundnut selling?

   (Suppose the government forced him into farming)

   The government has powers. There is nothing I can do but go back to my home village at Kisarawe.

2. Musa Juma, a Buguruni fishmonger (married with five children), gets a profit of shillings 100-200 per day. Asked about his reaction to the campaign, he replied:

   It is a good thing that people should be involved in some gainful activity or other. But there are people who have their businesses who will be harassed for no good reason. I don’t see how you will convince me that a certain job is better than what I am doing now. Even if you give me employment in your company, I won’t accept it. (Why?) Because I just can’t survive on a monthly salary.

   Admittedly, not all of them can tell success stories but there must, nevertheless, be a distinction between unemployed people and self-employed people. As a *Daily News* correspondent remarked:

   The informal sector has become an important facet of the economic life of most developing countries and future policies should be oriented to improving the work, health and educational facilities of the informal sector instead of viewing it as a temporary phenomenon to be erased from the urban map of the Third World.

The Deployment Act was enacted in May 1983 and became effective on 15 October 1983. Ever since, round-ups and arrests of suspects have been a common feature of life in Dar-es-Salaam. Notwithstanding official assurances prior to this ‘operation’ that the ‘unemployed’ should not be treated like criminals, and that the resettlement exercise was not meant to be a punishment, the actual enforcement of the Act has shown the contrary. In September 1983 President
Nyerere urged the Prime Minister to be ‘bold’ in implementing the Deployment Act:

If we don’t disturb loiterers, they will disturb us ... Prime Minister, don’t feel shy to disturb these loiterers (Daily News, 26 September 1983).

It was significant that the President likened loiterers to economic saboteurs and racketeers ‘whom the nation has declared war on’. Earlier on he had referred to the unemployed in urban areas as ‘criminals and idle parasites’ (Nyerere 1979: 68). Following the President (as usual), regional leaders resolved in their meeting a day after the President’s speech that ‘there should be no leniency to loiterers. They should be dealt with mercilessly and should not be coaxed to join the programme’ (Daily News, 27 November 1983). The message was clear.

Round-ups and arrests of suspected loiterers and ‘unemployed’ people under the terms of the new Act began in the second half of October 1983. The procedure was that the police, people’s militia and national service soldiers would randomly round up people in the streets during working hours and arrest all of them regardless of any excuse they could give. The soldiers had been instructed not to entertain any excuse. The rounded up people would then be taken to one of three centres established for the scrutinisation of their documents. Those with identification cards were asked to surrender them until they brought letters from their employers certifying that they were employed by them. Married women were given documents valid for seven days within which period they were supposed to establish that they were validly married. Those declared ‘unemployed’ were then repatriated to their villages (if they could pay their own fares), or to sisal plantations at the government’s expense to be employed as sisal cutters. However, throughout October and November less than 10 per cent of those repatriated reached their destinations.

On the first day a total of 5,724 people were rounded up, but after scrutinising them (which took about two days) only 559 were declared ‘unemployed’. This means that a lot of ordinary workers and housewives were arrested. On another swoop, out of 1,725 arrests only 317 were found with dubious particulars and detained for further questioning. There were reports that some people were handcuffed when rounded up, and that some were forced to do some drills.

In one swoop aimed at shoe-shiners only, out of the 22 arrested, nine were found to be students in a vocational school supplementing their income by part-time shoe-shining. They were warned ‘against turning to shoe-shining’, the implication being that by doing shoe-shining work in their free time to augment their allowances they were committing a crime. Two of the shoe-shiners were disabled; they were freed and told ‘to secure acceptable jobs’ (as if jobs were readily available). Most of the rest were sent to sisal plantations.

It should be noted that the same activity, ie: shoe-shining, would be lawful in a town like Morogoro. The Morogoro regional authorities wisely resolved that local brewers, shoe-shiners, bun bakers and many others involved in the informal sector were rendering necessary services to the people and therefore they would not be disturbed. Instead they would get assistance to improve their business.

The President has described this campaign as a strong vehicle for enhancing economic production in the country. Not many can agree with him. However, our immediate concern is to observe the state’s criminalisation of rational and
ordinary practices and the state's employment of its coercive apparatuses in enforcing this policy. The deepening economic crisis has pushed this process to absurd lengths. In trying to solve the crisis in such a way new forms of 'criminal behaviour' have emerged. For example, there is a booming sale of fake identity cards in Dar-es-Salaam bearing forged signatures of senior parastatal and government officials. The whole exercise simply is not workable in its present form. It is difficult to conceive of a situation where the entire 'not gainfully employed' population can be confined to the villages short of the most repressive measures reminiscent of Stalin's Russia.

This is a dilemma facing all post-colonial African states. The underdeveloped nature of the productive forces means that the state has to be directly and closely involved in the process of production. Like the colonial state before it, it has a central role in promoting economic development. At the same time the underdeveloped social formation means that the state has no real incentives to offer in order to generate development. The incorporation of the economies of these states into the world capitalist system and the dependency relations arising therefrom means that the post-colonial states cannot even determine the prices of their primary commodities, since these are determined by the world market. The dwindling prices of primary commodities, especially in times of recession, means that the peasants have to be pushed to increase the volume of their products in order to sustain the economies of the post-colonial states. In Tanzania, as we have seen, this has been accompanied by measures intended to mobilise more people in the production of primary commodities whether they like it or not. All such measures, even if entirely successful (which is doubtful), merely entrench further the existing dependency relations without giving the peasants or the 'not gainfully employed' any real improvement in their living conditions. Only an agrarian revolution accompanied by an internally integrated economy, less vulnerable to international capitalism, stands to offer a meaningful alternative to this problem. Otherwise some people will continue to be scapegoats and to be penalised for a national catastrophe not of their own making.

Leonard P. Shaidi

Bibliographic Note

MULTINATIONALS IN NIGERIAN AGRICULTURE IN THE 1980s
Preliminary investigations of the role of Transnational Corporations in Nigerian agriculture in the 1980s suggest that the corporations are operating, as an
ordinary practices and the state's employment of its coercive apparatuses in enforcing this policy. The deepening economic crisis has pushed this process to absurd lengths. In trying to solve the crisis in such a way new forms of 'criminal behaviour' have emerged. For example, there is a booming sale of fake identity cards in Dar-es-Salaam bearing forged signatures of senior parastatal and government officials. The whole exercise simply is not workable in its present form. It is difficult to conceive of a situation where the entire 'not gainfully employed' population can be confined to the villages short of the most repressive measures reminiscent of Stalin's Russia.

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MULTINATIONALS IN NIGERIAN AGRICULTURE IN THE 1980s
Preliminary investigations of the role of Transnational Corporations in Nigerian agriculture in the 1980s suggest that the corporations are operating, as an
American official put it, 'under the umbrella of government to government co-operation' arrangements. The central thrust of the strategy is to 'promote joint ventures in agriculture' between these companies and 'Nigerians who have land, some capital, but not the technology and expertise'. Parallel to this 'channelling of development into private hands' (which in the case of the United States companies also coincides with a policy which is of prime interest of the Reagan Administration), is that of encouraging the World Bank, Ford Foundation, and Church organisations to help the Nigerian government in providing services to small farmers. As an American official put it:

It is very difficult for a large company from the United States to come over and work with individual peasants who have plots of maybe two or three hectares, but the two types of investment go together (Interview 14.10.82).

The joint ventures are to be in the areas of (1) irrigation, (2) poultry and livestock, (3) farming such as rice production, (4) food processing. Even where such projects are to be undertaken with Federal Government agencies, state governments, or parastatal organisation, the stipulation that a company operating in Nigeria must have 60 per cent ownership in the hands of Nigerians still allows room for the integration of individual Nigerian capitalists into these projects. In this report focus shall be on German and American companies as case studies.

The entry of German companies into Nigerian agriculture is visible in at least four areas. First, is the area of dam construction. Three projects have been undertaken so far: Kafin Zaki irrigation project in Bauchi State; the Dutsinma project in Kaduna State, and the Maiduguri dam project in Borno State. The Kafin Zaki project which is to irrigate 150,000 hectares was commissioned by President Shagari on 14 October 1982 and has cost 130 million Naira (New Nigerian 15.10.82). It was constructed by the German Company Dywidag Nigeria Ltd. The Dutsinma project is being constructed by Nocon Nigeria Ltd., and the project in Maiduguri is being handled by Preusag Nigeria Ltd and Hydroquest Nigeria Ltd. Dam construction earns profits through fees for design and the supply of machinery for construction and maintenance of the dam and its paraphernalia.

The second area is that of planning and constructing flour and rice mills. Three major German companies involved in this in Northern Nigeria are CCC in Kano, Rao Imex in Jos, and Otto Wolf in Kano and Kaduna. Profits are earned in this area through fees for designs, construction and selling of equipment and management contracts.

The third area is that of the establishment of a factory for assembling agricultural machinery. This is still at the stage of discussion between Nigerian and German officials following the visit of President Shagari to Germany in March 1982. Also under discussion are projects on livestock, food and milk processing, farming and the establishment of co-operatives. The Germans are now discussing plans for establishing ranches with individual Nigerians in Kaduna State with a view to an integrated rearing of dairy cattle and a milk processing plant. As a German official put it:

What does it help if you have livestock here if you import milk? There is no milk processing company here in Nigeria which can depend on Nigerian milk. They all depend on imported milk (Interview 14.10.82).
German capital will most probably come in through the German Development Company (Deutsche Entwicklungsgesellschaft-DEG) which ‘sponsors investment by German business in developing countries by making equity investments in companies in developing countries and/or providing loans with equity features’. The rule that governs this exercise is clearly stated thus:

The DEG operates according to private enterprise principles. It has to obtain adequate return on its commitments in order to cover its outlay. Thus it contributes to the financing only of investment with reasonable prospects to make a profit following an appropriate initial run-up period. (DEG, Annual report, p.1).

As of 1981 the DEG had the following examples of projects in African agriculture:

**Ivory Coast**: Producing anthurium flowers ‘on an initial area of five hectares for export to European markets’; producing rubber on a 5,300 hectare-wide Rapids Grah plantation together with the Commonwealth Development Corporation (London), the Caisse Centrale de Co-operation Economique (Paris), and the European Investment Bank (Luxembourg).

**Malawi**: Producing ethanol to be used as a petroleum admixture from sugar cane molasses with a capacity of five million litres annually.

**Somali**: Producing molasses for export (DEG, Annual Report, pp.30-32).

None of the projects showed interest in food production for local consumption.

The entry of American companies into Nigerian agriculture has the double feature of involvement in agricultural production as well as selling of machinery. In the areas of production the principal areas are rice production, poultry rearing, and cattle rearing. Two projects are already underway, while two are under discussion in rice growing. The projects are being jointly undertaken by Harvester International and the Nigerian Grain Production Company. There are five poultry projects underway. The leading company is Beatrice Foods, the largest food company in the United States, with sales of 10 to 12 billion dollars a year. In the area of livestock, Top Foods (an American company) is in a joint venture with Foremost Dairy (a Nigerian company). The poultry projects involve the construction of facilities for breeding, laying of eggs, packaging of eggs and of slaughtered chicken; the bringing in of breeding stock and parent birds; the importation of feed; the construction of storage for the grains; and managing the projects on a contract basis for three or more years.

What is of particular interest to the American companies is the bringing in of parent-birds out of which the chicks will be hatched as opposed to Nigerian scientists developing indigenous parent stocks out of cross-breeding local stock. Retaining the know-how of developing parent stocks will allow the American companies to retain control of the lucrative trade of selling day-old chicks to poultry farmers. The American companies are also interested in importing the grains for feeding the poultry. As an American official put it:

> that makes us very happy because we can continue to sell our grain. (Interview 14.10.82)

In the area of dairy and beef cattle Foremost Dairy ‘probably brought the cattle here’, although other companies are considering importing semen for artificial insemination and developing a hybrid species in their Nigerian operations. Importing live cattle and semen for artificial insemination would be two
important ways of sending out profits back to the parent company as cost of purchasing vital inputs. The companies would thereby undermine the autonomous development of the herding of cattle in the hands of Nigerian nomads and settled peasant Fulani families. The World Bank is currently working on a scheme which is intended to integrate ‘progressive’ village Fulani into purchasing equipment for processing feeds and feed components from multinationals. The so-called ‘progressive’ Fulani individuals are given loans for purchasing such inputs for production within settlement centres. In the past three years 50 such settlements have been established with waterholes, clinics and pasture storage. The Federal Government has so far provided 635,000 tons of supplementary feed per year at the cost of 100 million Naira excluding the cost of transportation (Federal Director of Livestock, at National Conference on Beef Production, July 1982). Finally, in the area of production, Nigeria is also paying American companies for an aerial soil survey of the country with a view to establishing which soils are suitable for which crops. Such information will of course be of considerable use to American companies which might want to go into farming.

The other major area of interest to American companies is that of bringing in farm machinery and its distribution. These will range from tractors, and combines to small farm implements (Interviews, US Embassy Official, 14.10.82). This would seem to differ from the German strategy of manufacturing such machinery in Nigeria and pre-empting imports. Benue State alone ordered 700 tractors in 1982, and ‘about 300 tractors were put out of use in Benue last year because the state government could not secure spare parts or effect necessary repairs’ (National Concord 12.10.82). This legacy of importing farm machinery has clashed with that of local assembling of such machinery in Bauchi State. A Nigerian Standard editorial (13.10.82) chastised state governments for not purchasing tractors assembled in the plant in preference to importing. The paper suggested that imports gave officials avenues for receiving bribes from multinationals which local manufacturing does not. The American companies which are interested in bringing in farm machinery into Nigerian agriculture are Ford Motor Company, International Harvester and Occidental Petroleum. All three are formidable giants whose interest in Nigerian agriculture was preceded by a two-volume report compiled by 10 American experts who undertook research on ‘constraints on Nigerian agriculture’. Two such constraints are policies of the Nigerian government which hinder the flow of profits and foreign exchange out of the country, and the ownership of land by communities which makes it difficult for the companies to buy large tracts of land or lease it for long periods of time (Interview, US Embassy official, 14.10.82). Corruption in Nigerian agricultural projects was also touched on by a Senator thus:

The green revolution is not succeeding in the south because of corruption. The north is corrupt, but projects get implemented. People make money, but the project is there. In the south, the money is diverted. You find green revolution or river basin signboard, and nothing after the signboard. All the money is diverted into the pockets of politicians (National Concord, 18.10.82).

The enthusiasm for relying on the TNCs is a vote of no confidence in the small farmer either as an independent producer or as a producer in collectivity with others. This policy is a departure from the colonial one in which the British Government for example rejected Lever Brothers and other companies who wanted to establish plantations in Nigeria in favour of agricultural production by
Nigerian peasant farmers, while Lugard had earlier dismantled slave-based plantations. Secondly, the policy places confidence in a new social category made up of businessmen, civil servants, military personnel and rural elites whose history was one of seeking education and work in the bureaucracy in order to run away from agriculture and the agencies of rural production: a class in negation of agriculture rather than engaged in agricultural husbandry. This class knows how to farm the bureaucracy for personal wealth but not how to farm the land. It is not a class with a creative orientation to agriculture like the immigrant white settlers in Algeria, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. Those settlers exploited African labour with the utmost cruelties, but they also had a creative management attitude and commitment to agriculture. In Nigeria, this neo-agricultural elite is combining with the TCNs as co-partners in food production.

The central problem with this strategy is that the industrial link with agriculture will not be local since industrialised inputs will come from outside economies brought in under contract by the so-called technical partners. Consequently that central dynamic link between the food sector and industrial growth will be missing. Moreover profits from this partnership will in the larger proportion be exported out of Nigeria thus undermining reinvestment. Being in partnership with an elite which will not be oriented towards technological innovation and invention by members of their class on the farm responding to local necessities and cost-cutting, the export of fees for machinery, patents, purchase of other inputs will constantly be used for sending profits out of Nigeria as a result of dependency on the technical partners.

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POPULAR PARTICIPATION VERSUS PEOPLE’S POWER: NOTES ON POLITICS AND POWER STRUGGLES IN GHANA

When Flight-Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings came to power for the second time on 31 December 1981, calling on the people to form People’s Defence Committees and Workers Defence Committees, and to participate through them in the affairs of the nation, he was admitting that the ‘House Cleaning’ exercise he had spearheaded in 1979 had not been sufficient to transform Ghana permanently. Peoples’s participation, he hoped, would do it. Rawlings said that at one time he had thought exploitation and oppression were accidents of human character, but that he had now seen that they were part of a planned and systematic logic of social control.

The response from the people was immediate and positive. Demonstrations were held throughout the country in support of the ‘second coming’ of J.J. (Junior Jesus). This time the ‘revolution’, as it had been in June 1979, was not rooted in complaints within military circles. The highest organ of power after the 31 December action, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), contained three civilians on its seven member body. The main progressive organisations (Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guards, The African Youth Command, The
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People's Revolutionary League of Ghana, The New Democratic Movement and The June Fourth Movement) organised a six hour demonstration through the main streets of Accra on 3 January in support of the ‘revolution’. The role of ‘the people’ in the revolution has, however, been one of the main issues dividing the leadership and causing conflict between the leadership and its ‘natural constituency’ in the progressive organisation and people’s committees.

Within a couple of weeks details of the tasks of the PDCs were being outlined. One of the first such expositions was by members of the PNDC, Chris Atim. In an interview on radio Ghana he described the PDCs as the ‘power base of this country from now on’. Expanding, he explained how those into whose hands power had been entrusted in the past always turned out to have used that power in their narrow interest causing the people to regret their decision. Now power was to be wielded by the people directly. This theme was reiterated by other members of the ruling body. Later a more elaborate exposition of the concerns of the revolution emanating from the offices of the second most powerful organ, the Interim National Coordinating Committee (INCC), described the progress unleashed by the action of 31 December as a ‘National Democratic Revolution’, a designation that raised as many questions as it answered, if not more. Soon people were talking about ‘The Process’ indicating the difficulties which the concrete circumstances provided for a ‘classical’ treatment of the events unfolding.

These theoretical problems notwithstanding, People's Defence Committees (PDCs) and Workers Defence Committees (WDCs) were formed the length and breadth of the country within a matter of weeks. But the spontaneity of the revolution and the weakness of the structures intended to guide it along led almost inevitably to clashes with ‘the people’ who interpreted their rallying call in ways not intended by those who issued it. One of the first notable instances was in May 1982. A conflict had emerged between PDC and management of the mental hospital in Accra. Eventually the matter was resolved by the INCC which was set up to guide the formation and development of the PDCs and WDCs. In a statement issued at the close of the dispute, the INCC overruled some of the demands of the PDCs and ordered the transfer of two PDC officials from the hospital, one of whom had been appointed by the PNDC itself. The INCC declared three lessons needed to be learnt from this experience. First, ‘It is not all management personnel who should be antagonised by the defence committees. There are several of them who are genuinely patriotic . . .’ Second, ‘Defence Committees must aim for one thing — increased production. We have emphasised time and again, that these are superior forms of organisation which must, in practice, lead to higher productivity’. Last, ‘... the Defence Committees are meant to give working people an opportunity to participate in decision making, not to hijack completely the responsibilities for taking decisions from management’. Striking this balance was to prove more difficult than even those who did recognise them as valid objectives must have thought when they began to participate in the ‘revolution’. Who was to decide when participation had been transformed into hijack and then what was to happen? For others this distinction was unnecessary. For them the revolution had come and the working people should assume power.

While these issues were being played out first by debate and then by force of arms, PDCs and WDCs were finding their feet. In particular the northern parts
of the country proved to be healthy ground for their formation as, surprisingly, did parts of Ashanti. In the industrial heartland of the country, Tema, WDCs grew from strength to strength under the guidance of the INCC and the progressive organisations. They were soon to come into conflict with the management of a number of multinational companies. Most notable of these were the WDCs of Ghana Textile Printing Company (GTP) (a subsidiary of Unilever), Allied Foods (formerly Cadbury Ghana Ltd) and Juapong Textiles. In each instance the workers were able to expose the anti-nationalist position of the companies concerned, initiate and work out measures of their own to deal with the problem and in the case of GTP, where workers took over the factory, to implement them successfully. The GTP action was of particular importance because it occurred in the midst of the developing showdown between the PNDC and apparently more radical elements in the progressive organisations and a few days before the attempted coup in November 1982. The response of the PNDC indicated that the WDCs in question were considered to have gone too far, that they had hijacked rather than participated in the decision making process.

Apart from the civilian Defence Committees, moves were made to establish similar structures in the military, for it was clear that without some political work (a lot of political work) inside the armed forces the addition of the prefix ‘people’s’ to the names of the three services meant nothing. Indeed, it created confusion and served to mislead the people. The focus of this work by the INCC was to get the members of the armed forces to understand the character of the 31 December action and who the enemies were. In particular, they were to develop different attitudes to the civilian population and to see the people as their allies rather than as inconsequentials to be brutalised if they stepped out of line. The ultimate task in this regard was to get the armed forces to accept, and indeed welcome, the active participation of the civilian population in the defence of the revolution. This crash and, as the PNDC leadership was to contend, rash course in revolutionary politics was also a source of conflict and confrontation. The newly politicised military personnel displayed the usual fervour of the newly converted. Indications are that this created problems not only for the leadership but also for the officers who, faced with rebellious other ranks and their newly acquired revolutionary ideology, sought to reimpose the command structure as a prelude to uprooting the emerging radical rhetoric. The champion of the officers was a member of the PNDC, Brigadier Nunoo Mensah, who used the introduction of Defence Committees into the army as an excuse for launching his attack on the general concept of People’s Power and Popular Participation and argued that the armed forces ‘Durbar’ was a sufficient forum for discussion and participation. Ghana certainly did not need to attack foreign capital; rather it was to be encouraged and nurtured.

It may be that the reorganisation of the INCC and its metamorphosis into the National Defence Committee (NDC) in August 1982 was in part an attempt to respond to some of these different and conflicting concerns. The INCC had organised integrated political programmes for all cadres (military, police, civilian). The new NDC organised separate programmes for each cadre who were trained in isolation from each other.

Pressure had also been placed on the incipient divisions within the PNDC by the abduction and murder of three high court judges and a retired army officer in June 1982. Middle class fingers began to point at the Council and suspicion
seemed to have not been misplaced when it was discovered that one of its members, the workers representative Amarte Kwei, was deeply implicated. The Special Investigations Board, established by the PNDC to investigate the matter, led the hunt for a PNDC connection. Perhaps wanting to ensure that the findings of the Board would be accepted and seeking to show that it had nothing to hide, the Council had appointed one of the most conservative of judges to head the Board, and he wreaked havoc. The intrigue around the murder investigations fuelled the differences between members of the Council and at one stage, when acrimony was at its highest, one member was reported to have accused another of seeking to frame him. The resulting confrontation took on wider ethnic and political overtones.

The first serious test for the PNDC came on 28 October 1982 when strange developments, still not fully explained, were set in train among its progressive constituency. What seems to be clear is that in October a fraction within the left sought to advance the revolution by engineering the removal of Rawlings and Kojo Tsikata, Special Adviser to the PNDC and in charge of security. Within a month, on 24 November, the right tried its own direct bid for state power. The day before, Brigadier Nunoo Mensah had resigned from the Council giving as his reason the accusation by Amarte Kwei that Kojo Tsikata was involved in the murder of the judges and the retired army major. The Brigadier could not, however, have known of the accusation by the means he claimed he did, since it was made the day after he had resigned, and on the morning of the attempted coup.

After 24 November many of those thought to have been implicated in either that action or in the events of October involving members of the left (many from within the NDC) were arrested for questioning. For some it was a brief visit resulting in a quick release. Not so for many others. In any event, whatever trust had existed among the various groups of progressives, and between them and the leadership — particularly Rawlings — evaporated. The entire membership of the NDC was dismissed and the NDC dissolved to be reconstituted only in March. By then Chris Atim, former head of the INCC, had left the country and was seen in Togo before he headed for London. Alopga Akata-Pore, secretary for the Military Defence Committees and member of the PNDC, was arrested. After he had been released in 1984, he too left the country and surfaced in London.

In February and March 1983 Rawlings, the chairman of the PNDC, made speeches which criticised the way some of the PDCs and WDCs were operating. In August he went further and criticised the attitude of what he termed ‘the cadres of the revolution’. ‘They were not humble enough’, he argued, ‘too quick to call those who differed with them reactionary, and hesitant to get down and translate their theories into concrete works’. They had been too keen to push the process forward, ignoring the preparedness and willingness of the people to follow. These speeches further divided the left, demoralised the cadres and sowed greater doubt in the minds of what till then seemed his natural constituency as to his commitment to their line of thinking. For in addition to his admonitions, the PDCs and WDCs which till then had been to all intents and purposes closed to the propertied, powerful and wealthy of the old order, were opened to all. Less emphasis was placed on the people, the class and political nature of the process and more on the need for ‘Nationalism, Patriotism, Production and Efficiency’. During the same period, February to August 1983, the NDC organised two
national cadre schools and regional schools to build on the work done during the national sessions. However, since August 1983 no National Cadre School has been held and the regional schools have been given little prominence in the national papers.

Until early 1984, it seemed that the chairman of the PNDC had most definitely set his face against deepening the participatory and radical content of the PDCs and WDCs. However, in February 1984, Rawlings surveyed the events of the previous year, acknowledged the widespread existence of corruption and misbehaviour within PDCs and WDCs and spoke of the increasing influence of money and possessions among the ‘dedicated citizens of the revolution’ which was undermining the resolve and dedication of its cadres. He talked at even greater length of the ‘occasional criticism’ to which the basic revolutionary organs had been subjected: ‘most of them’ he remarked, ‘are on the verge of losing confidence and becoming rather demoralised’. Both of these phenomena he blamed on the government’s policy of ‘reconciliation’ — ‘a policy which is meant to give room for any patriotic reason of integrity and good will to participate in the decision making process’. That policy had been abused, twisted and distorted ‘to dilute and divert the strength of the revolution’. So what was to be the solution? Would the policy of ‘reconciliation’ be modified or would there be a stricter application of the concept ‘patriotic person of integrity and goodwill’? Neither happened. Instead the chairman affirmed the original social goals of the revolution: ‘The attack on social injustice goes on. There is a clear line between right and work, between justice and injustice and anyone who thinks that he can cross that line untouched, is making a very grave mistake . . . You must therefore not be afraid to take positive actions or report to the appropriate agencies. The organs of the revolution must stand firm and hold the line of defence’.

The effects of this fence mending speech were slightly offset by the tone and strictures of the Independence Day anniversary speech, delivered only a month later in March 1984. On the receiving end this time were not the revolutionary cadres or the PDCs and WDCs but the leadership of the Trades Union Congress. Shortly after 31 December the old leadership of the TUC had been forced to resign. The Secretary-General resigned in February 1982 and an interim occupant of the post was elected. Towards the end of February the seventeen General-Secretaries of the Union were forced out en masse. The TUC was taken over by a body called the Association of Local Unions, more radical than the former General-Secretaries, which quickly elected itself a new interim chairman. An extraordinary National Delegates Conference was held in May and an Interim Management Committee of the TUC formed. This body was later given the mandate to restructure and democratise the TUC and review its constitution. But the new progressive leadership was deemed to have compromised itself when not only were its proposals in relation to the Budget of April 1983 considered to be insufficiently radical but were in any case ignored. In the light of rapidly rising prices, the leadership of the Interim Management Committee failed to retain controlling power in the Congress held early in 1984. Their replacements, some of whom had been General-Secretaries in the old TUC, submitted a demand for a minimum daily wage of 300 cedis. The chairman’s response to their demand was emphatic and direct: ‘. . . there is a real danger that discussions about a meaningful living wage will be influenced more by blind emotion than by scientific and intelligent analysis . . . such as the mention of 300 cedis per day . . . absolute rubbish — the outcome of ignorant minds. Are such people enemies?’
the 1984 budget, the minimum wage was increased by about 60 per cent to 40 cedis a day. Whether they had been enemies or not, the leadership had made little attempt to conciliate them.

The Emerging New State
The dominant political organs after 31 December 1981 were the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), The National Defence Committee (NDC) (the reformed INCC) and the PNDC Government made up of Ministers or PNDC secretaries, as they were called. The Citizens Vetting Committee (CVC) was established to investigate those whose life styles were incompatible with their declared incomes. Under its scrutiny many businessmen and professionals were found to have lived from one financial year to the next without paying taxes either on income, profits or duties of one sort or another. The National Investigation Committee (NIC), in overall charge of legal investigations of both criminal and political character, was like an embryonic Attorney General’s department. Its staff came from the law department of the University in Legon, the army and people seconded from the old bureaucracy, still intact. By August 1982 the Public Tribunals had begun operating, dispensing justice to those found guilty of political crimes who would have been let off, it was felt, by the old legal, system through ‘legal technicalities’. In the army the situation was fluid, the command structure had not been revised and yet junior ranks were exercising considerably more power and authority than before, and with the help of the INCC/NDC, beginning to question the basis of Ghanaian society and their role in the neo-colonial state which, though seriously fractured, had not by any means been overthrown.

The original composition of the PNDC reflected the wide variety of interest groups which had to be appeased. Brigadier Nunoo-Mensah, the most conservative member, had been retired from the army by former President Limann, was popular among a section of the forces for his professionalism, and was there to provide both the officers and the middle classes with a focus. The Reverend Father Damuah, a catholic priest, had come to public notice for speaking out on the increasingly intolerable conditions under which people were living during Limann’s time. He had also gained a certain notoriety for having been detained by Nkrumah. He was thus considered a champion of human rights and an influence for moderation. Amarte Kwei, on the other hand, had come to public notice under Limann’s government for his role as leader of the workers of the state industrial concern GIHOC, when they paid an uninvited visit to the National Assembly. The assembled members were not impressed and Amarte Kwei along with hundreds of other workers had been dismissed with dispatch. Alois Akata-Pore, who was made secretary for the military Defence Committees, had a reputation as a militant and progressive. At the time of the 31 December coup he was reading economics at the University of Cape Coast. Chris Atim, the first of many Secretaries of the INCC/NDC, was a student activist. In 1978 he had been the first National Vice-President of the National Union of Ghana Students. He was also at one time editor of A Luta, a militant University magazine. Before 31 December he had been the General Secretary of the June Fourth Movement (JFM), one of the two most important progressive organisations in the country.

Before the list of Secretaries was announced Flt-Lt. Rawlings had said that he intended to form a government with a nationalist outlook. When the names were
finally unveiled they did on the whole reflect persons of known nationalist/patriotic and progressive orientation. The announcement, however, provided a foretaste of some of the conflicts that would emerge between the PNDC and its progressive constituency among civilians. Four of those appointed were objected to on grounds of not being nationalist enough or of being downright reactionary. The PNDC would not budge and insisted on the names remaining on the prospective list of appointees even when some offered to step down. The only ‘soldier’ on the list was the Secretary for Health, but he was retired. A number had established reputations as progressives: the Secretaries for Health, Information, the Interior, Youth and Sports, Finance and Economic Planning. A well known progressive was appointed to the post of Special Adviser to the PNDC with additional responsibility for security. The appointment of Captain Kojo Tsikata, a retired army officer, more than any other single appointment made imperialism sit up and look out for its interests.

Though the progressive organisations in the country had been established a couple of years before 31 December they were provided with considerable political leverage by being virtually given the INCC/NDC, whose membership read like a roll call of the leading youthful militants. Chris Atim, member of the PNDC, was chairman and as former secretary general of the June Fourth Movement was well placed to provide the latter with considerable influence in the INCC/NDC, though other progressive organisations, for example the New Democratic Movement (the second most important) and the People’s Revolutionary League of Ghana were also represented.

By August 1982 important changes in structure and responsibilities had been made. Whereas there had been one member of the PNDC on the INCC, there were four on the new NDC. In addition to Chris Atim these were Rawlings, now the chairman, Alolga Akata-Pore and Warrant Officer Adjei Buadi. The PNDC co-ordinator, P.V. Obeng, was a progressive engineer. The Secretary to the PNDC, Emmanuel Hansen, a university lecturer with JFM connections who had returned from England to take up his post, was made secretary to the NDC. Before long, however, he was to return to England without, it seems, formally resigning and for reasons which have yet to be disclosed. Known progressives were still dominant on the NDC but they were now to be supervised by the PNDC directly. In addition a new post among the secretaries was created, that of Secretary for PDCs and WDCs, which tended to create a certain amount of overlap and duplication. In other respects the structure of the state remained much the same as before and certainly the bureaucracy had not been tampered with in any significant way. The general line of attack, itself a source of disagreement, was to create alternative structures where necessary rather than to dismantle or smash the existing structures. Numerous organising commissions and mass movements were formed: the Democratic Youth League of Ghana, The National Youth Organising Commission, The December 31st Women’s Movement, The Federation of Ghanaian Women etc. One important change was the degree to which the state attempted to penetrate Ghanaian society. Very soon after 31 December district and local councils were activated.

PNDC Law 42 was gazetted in February 1983 after the political turmoils of October and November. It enunciated the Directive Principles Of State Policy. Sub section (a) reads ‘a basis of social justice and equality of opportunities is to be established, particular attention being paid to the deprived sections of the
community, and to the reconstruction of the society in a revolutionary process directed against the previous structures of injustice and exploitation'. Other subsections deal with human rights, the eradication of corrupt practices, the need for national integration, the institution of planning, the management of the economy for the maximum welfare of the people of Ghana, provision of educational and health facilities, equal access to judicial institutions and the promotion of Ghanaian culture. The task of the NDC was to educate the nation on the objectives of the revolution in pursuance of the Directive Principles of State Policy. The 67 sections of the Law cover a wide range of issues and it is this rather than what is actually said that must have unnerved, as it did, the middle classes. The PNDC was giving notice that it intended to remain in power for a considerable time and was providing itself with the legal foundations to do so. If the Directive Principles were not saying that the working people were in control of state power it was at least saying that the emergent state was to be nationalist and not neo-colonialist in character. But how was this to be guaranteed?

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The emergent state under the PNDC cannot be characterised completely by looking at its structure and class/ideological composition. Though the national question was never confronted, its currents played an important part in some of what has happened since 31 December. Historically, peoples of the Akan language group have always played a pivotal role in the political life of Ghana. In practice this has meant the Ashantis, the most important element of the Akan grouping. For them Nkrumah's problem was not just that he represented the 'verandah boys', the down and outs, the lumpen elements but that he did not belong to either the first or second 'houses' of the Akan nation. It is not entirely coincidental that Ewes and 'northerners', two of the most marginalised sections of the emerging Ghanaian nation, were at the forefront of the 31 December action, the most serious attempt yet in Ghanaian history to turn the class tables. The 'right' has been more realistic about this question than the 'left', who have not wanted to admit the issues raised, certainly not in public. The 'right' has said that the PNDC is an attempt by the Ewes in particular (assisted by the northerners) to usurp state power.
What has complicated the question has been the division within the ranks of the 'left' along these very same lines. During the days of former President Limann, when Rawlings was 'in the wilderness', much of the opposition to Limann came from young and militant radicals in the June Fourth Movement who tended to be on the whole from the north where Limann himself comes from. The New Democratic Movement, on the other hand, tends to have a preponderance of Ewes in its ranks. This would not in itself be of much importance but with the struggle for state power intensifying they took on an added significance. It so happened that it was in the main members of the JFM who were prized from the NDC after the political disturbances in October 1982 and the attempted coup in November of the same year. They were also almost all northerners.

With the temporary eclipse of organised progressives, military personnel have played an increasing part in the PNDC government. Since 1983 a number of posts have been filled by military men. The Secretary for Youth and Sports is a retired major; the Secretary for Greater Accra, a wing commander; the Secretary for the Central Region is a colonel as is the Secretary for the Volta Region. An army major is the operations assistant in the Ministry of Roads and Highways. The Managing Director of Ghana Airways and of the Biniani Metal Complex are both military men as are the chairman of the Implementation and Monitoring Committee of the Cocoa Marketing Board, of the Bonsa tyre factory, the largest manufacturer of tyres in the country and of the reconstituted management committee of the department of Civil Aviation. This tendency towards the remilitarisation of the PNDC reflects as well Rawlings' increasing preoccupation with the question of management skills as the economy failed to improve.

Given the performance of state corporations at the time of the 31 December action it was not surprising that the PNDC was not keen to go in for mass nationalisation. Without a drastic change in the nature of management the state would have been bankrupt overnight. An important initiative in the area of the economy, however, was the establishment of Interim Management Committees in the various state corporations which by law had to have both trade union and WDC representation. These management committees have been very successful and have been able to improve the operations of their respective companies. The most celebrated was the IMC at State Transport which was able, within a matter of months, to turn a deficit into a profit. During 1983 and 1984 these IMCs have gradually been replaced by 'Boards' which do not have to have WDC or Union representation. Thus the power of the workers on the ground to influence the operations of their enterprises can be said to have been curtailed. WDCs out — soldiers in?

The Politics of Economic Policy

The debates over the economy covered a wide spectrum of opinion. There were those who questioned the validity of concentrating on the economy at all. The leader article in Nsamankow, organ of the NDC, declared in August/September 1982 that 'the people have shown that, for now, at least, they are not very interested in economic demands. They are more interested in the resolution of the question of power. Who or what forces would be the power behind the revolution? This is what they want to know'. To a certain extent this view reflected the position of a significant section of the progressive forces. The
PNDC itself quickly came to believe that it was essential to tackle the economic question if state power was to be maintained.

Imperialism was recognised by all sections of the left as an enemy, responsible for many of the problems of Ghanaian economy, society and politics arising from the basic structure of the economy designed for the production and export of raw materials and importation of manufactured goods. The PNDC soon came to the conclusion, however, that the state of the economy demanded action to 'rehabilitate' it, an issue separate from the consequences of imperialism. Devaluation soon became the issue on which the various parties divided. Did accepting devaluation mean a realistic assessment of the requirements of sound economic management or a capitulation to the forces of imperialism and collaboration in their exploitative schemes? A third issue which arose in the debates was the consequences of different strategies of economic recovery and transformation for the political struggle. A highly 'technical' approach would strengthen the hand of the bureaucrats and managers as well as imperialism while a more political and democratic approach would serve to increase the peoples confidence in their own power to transform things for the better.

Discussions with the IMF began a few months after the PNDC came to power. In the first instance there appeared to be little common ground. By August 1982, however, the skeleton of a possible programme had begun to emerge. When this was presented to a joint meeting of Secretaries and the INNC/NDF it was agreed that in principle the plan could be accepted but it lacked, and therefore required, a much larger section devoted to what the people themselves could do to help solve the problems of the country. It was argued that this would help to ease the negative effects of the technical approach on the living conditions of the people. The debate over the economy generated such heat and so inflamed passions that it became one of the most important elements in the break-up of what had, till then, been the united if not homogeneous progressive centre of 'the process'. Other considerations included the 'fallout' consequences on the accusations and counter accusations made after the abduction and murder of the three high court judges and the retired army officer in June 1982 (see above).

By December 1982, when the tentative outlines of the PNDC plan for rehabilitation had hardened, the political divide had widened further. As a result of the attempted coups of November and of the internal disturbances the month before, the NDC had been disbanded and was being reconstituted. It had generally become public knowledge that a former member of the PNDC, Amarte Kwei, had been implicated in the judges affair. The middle classes were intensifying their campaign, insisting that there was further PNDC involvement. Alolga Akata-Pore had been detained for incitement to mutiny. A letter purporting to have been written by Chris Atim announcing his resignation from the PNDC was doing the rounds in Accra having surfaced, some reports suggest, from within an Embassy. A number of the most vocal elements in the JFM and the NDC who had been canvassing for a more final solution to the political question had been interned.

The PNDC Economic Recovery Programme announced by the Secretary for Finance and Economic Planning, Dr Kwesi Botchwey, on the eve of the first anniversary of the 31 December action, outlined an increased role for the state in certain key areas: import/export where a state monopoly was to be set up; in transportation where a series of public omnibus authorities were to be
established and in distribution for which a chain of 'people's shops' to be run by
the PDCs/WDCs was planned. It also came up with a novel approach to the
exchange rate question. A system of bonuses and surcharges was announced,
whereby all imports would be surcharged from 750 per cent to over 990 per cent.
The fund thus established would be used to provide exporters with a bonus over
and above the official exchange rate which in practice more closely approximated
the black market rate of the cedi. Though little attention was given to this move
at the time, it constituted the real devaluation of the cedi. An attempt was made
to protect the consumer items of working people from the steepest of these
surcharges, but since the actual levels required were so enormous the minimum
level was over 700 per cent. By the time of the announcement of the Recovery
Programme, certain sections of the 'left' had come to accept the iron logic of
devaulation. They insisted, however, on the concomitant importance of a
vigorous mobilisation effort to clear some of the more irrational bottlenecks in
the economy. However, there was no similar concensus on the hands off
approach to the interests of foreign capital. The Recovery Programme did not
contain any nationalisations and this was, rightly or wrongly, to convince a
significant section of the 'left' of the lack of preparedness of the PNDC to engage
in radical initiatives to uproot or even weaken the hold of imperialism in Ghana at
that time. Why this should be the case has been explained in various ways. One
argument holds that acceptance of the IMF programme dealt the death blow to
the more radical and participatory economic strategies being advocated. But this
seems to put the cart before the horse. Why should the PNDC have accepted the
IMF proposals (if, indeed, it did do so) in the first place? A more extreme version
holds that the PNDC, which from late 1982 into 1983 was to all intents and
purposes synonymous with Rawlings, is essentially not opposed to imperialism
and when confronted with the real possibility of being so, could not (would not)
translate rhetoric into reality. A more balanced assessment would have to take
the following into account. Ghana was in need of considerable quantities of
financial assistance with which to put the economy into a less precarious shape.
Most factories were running at 20 per cent capacity, some at as little as 5 per
cent. The foreign exchange content of manufacturing was in the upper 70 per
cent range. With a decline in all exports in value and, in some cases, value
terms, not only was there a balance of payment crisis but it looked like deepening.
Almost every state enterprise was running on Government subventions and the
Government deficit was already dangerously high. Whichever strategy was
adopted would require considerable funds, something the proponents of the
mobilisation approach did not seem to take into account sufficiently. The task of
securing financing for the participatory approach might well have been more
difficult than for the technical approach. There seems to be some indication that
hoped for, though perhaps not promised, assistance from countries considered
friendly, such as Libya and the Soviet Union, did not materialise.

The implications of the recovery programme were revealed in the budget of April
1983. The increases in food prices were spelt out. The results in the market place
were staggering. The increase in the (gross) minimum wage for the lower paid in
the public sector of 70 per cent could not offset the 100 per cent increase in petrol
prices which inevitably translated into higher transportation costs. Nor did it
match the 300 per cent increase in plantain and maize prices and the almost 200
per cent increase in garri (ground dried cassava).

Ironically it was the middle classes who, having opposed the progressive
undertones of the PNDC since its inception, and having no attachment to the concept of people's participation in the affairs of the country, emerged as champions of the people, calling the PNDC names for having deserted the workers and calling on the workers to help overthrow the 'tyrannical and exploitative' PNDC. In this endeavour they were backed by students who, having initially supported 'the process', and assisted in the evacuation of cocoa from the countryside, changed sides under a new executive of different political direction and were calling on the Council to resign. The budget of April 1983 can either be seen as the excuse or as the reason for the action of 19 June when a group of men, some having infiltrated the country from neighbouring states, held Broadcasting House for a couple of hours, announced the overthrow of the PNDC and sprung a number of their colleagues being tried for political/criminal offences against the state from three jails in and around Accra.

It is likely that the return of one million Ghanaians from Nigeria, the fact that the middle classes and, in particular, sections of the bourgeoisie along with the churches and chiefs, had helped to ease the rehabilitation of these 'prodigal' sons and daughters; agreement by the IMF to assist Ghana with a compensatory finance and stand-by facility and the developing drought had all influenced the economic strategy of the PNDC. By the time of the Donors Conference in Paris in November 1983, the economic programme had become a three year investment programme, with greater emphasis on the export sector, more reliance on international finance from western banks and companies, less reliance on the idea of people's shops and a total depoliticisation of the mobilisation programme.

In the event the Donors Conference lived up to expectations: sums in excess of 150 million dollars were pledged. Before it took place, the system of bonuses and surcharges which had been scheduled to continue for another nine months was scrapped, and the cedi was explicitly devalued. The new rate of 30 cedis to the dollar represented a 999 per cent devaluation (there has been one more devaluation since). At the Donors Conference it was revealed that the government had undertaken to adopt a flexible exchange rate policy, to get the state economic concerns to operate along commercial lines and, in effect in instances such as the timber corporation, to denationalise them. Meanwhile the National Mobilisation Programme was launched in July 1983 under the guidance of Commodore Obimpeh who had overseen the reabsorption of the returnees from Nigeria. In December 1982 under the economic recovery programme 500 million cedis had been earmarked for mobilisation. This had been confirmed in the Budget of 1983. When it was finally launched, reports indicate that 117 million of the now devalued cedi had been allocated. The current strategy was to raise much of the funding from the people themselves in self-help schemes which were becoming increasingly popular up and down the country.

Since the drought intensified in 1983 to become the worst for 48 years, Ghana has had to request considerable amounts of international assistance and in particular food aid. The problem was aggravated by bush fires which destroyed large areas of food and cash crops. The government has therefore had to divert sizeable funds to the replanting of these singed lands. With the shortage of food and the slow pace of replanting, it can be expected that many farms will be turned over to food crop farming permanently. With the Volta Lake seriously affected by the drought, electricity rationing had to be introduced in late 1983 and people have had to suffer 27 hours of electricity on and 21 hours off. Daily readings of the
water level of the Volta Lake some 12 feet below the minimum operating level of the Akosombo Dam, were printed on the front page of the national paper. Such discomforts have had to be borne with stoicism.

The 1984 rains have been better than the previous years and signs are that the harvest will be appreciably better. The funds from the government’s international efforts have begun to come in and be applied. The government had insisted that this approach is the key to tackling the economic problems of Ghana successfully. What it will also have to show is that this is similarly the way to make a popular revolution.

The PNDC has preferred that imperialism should be subjected to pressure as a result of technical discussions rather than the ‘spontaneous’ action of workers. After prolonged negotiations with Valco, the aluminium company owned by Kaiser and Reynolds, the PNDC negotiating team has been able to secure a significant improvement in the terms under which Valco operates in Ghana. Most notable aspects of the new agreement were: recognition by Valco that it was entitled only to the electricity generated from the Akosombo Dam and not any other; only some of its pot lines would be supplied at rates below what Ghana can secure in the international market; the price paid by Valco for electricity would be dependent on the quantity consumer and the price of alumina on the world market; the Government of Ghana has prior obligation to supply power to its own citizens before supplying power to Valco; though the government could not force Valco to create an integrated aluminium industry in Ghana, when facilities for the production of bauxite within Ghana are developed, the government would have the right to tax Valco’s imports in the interests of developing an integrated aluminium industry in the country. Perhaps most important of all, there is to be a review of the agreement every five years. Under the terms of the old agreement, it would not have been reviewed for 50 years had Valco insisted on its unilateral right to take up its option on renewal for a further 20 years. Invigorated by the success with Valco, the government is now preparing to take on a number of other multinationals whose operations are considered to be on terms unfavourable to Ghana.

Recent Trends and Future Prospects
In May 1984 at the ground breaking ceremony to begin work on the monument to Kwame Nkrumah at Nkroful, the Special Adviser to the PNDC, Kojo Tsikata, assessed the state of the ‘process’ and how far it had come: ‘In Ghana today the imperialists and their puppets do not have political power. But their influence, open and concealed, can be felt in many areas of our daily life and in our institutions’. The first achievement of the PNDC had been the overthrow of the old regime. To create the new society, however, required structures ‘that can help solve the problems facing our people through mobilisation’. And these, he contended, were absent. Clearly, therefore, the NDC is no longer considered a suitable structure for this mobilisation. Other elements that were considered missing included ‘a concrete framework of what is meant by popular control of the people over the state’. To date the most talked of structure for achieving the institutionalisation of peoples power is the National or Popular Assembly. This body which will be formed from the representatives of the people at regional level will in theory be the highest organ in the country, having more authority than the PNDC itself, resting as it will on the expressed wishes of the people.
Tsikata criticised those who want to theorise about the revolution without the concrete problems faced by the process. Those who talked glibly and arrogantly of deviation, militarism and even fascism he termed 'super revolutionaries' who were blind to their own lack of revolutionary humility and their petit-bourgeois commitment to the revolutionary process. These remarks clearly indicate that the divide between the PNDC and a section of its 'natural' constituency is still considerable and that the PNDC or at least important sections of it still regard themselves as actively advancing revolutionary struggles.

In his independence anniversary speech in March 1984, Jerry Rawlings affirmed the commitment to a National Assembly which would be 'truly representative and democratic with respect to the interest of the ordinary people of this country'. Although we can expect the National Assembly to be established in the immediate future in the continuing absence of 'a mobilising structure', by which was perhaps meant a party, it is difficult to see how the people will be able to deepen their revolutionary understanding and strengthen their ability to control the other branches of the state. Is a party in the offing?

While these events have been going on the PNDC has been coming out with measures that tend to confirm its continued radical commitment, for example, the new wealth tax introduced in August 1984. In the same month the chairman of the PNDC and a number of Secretaries went on an extended visit to Latin America especially to Nicaragua and Cuba but also to Surinam and Guyana.

Despite what has transpired in the two and three-quarter years since 31 December, the PNDC is still affirming its revolutionary intent. The two most important progressive organisations, the June Fourth Movement and the New Democratic Movement, are still working with the regime. Each new revolution, it seems, establishes a new 'orthodoxy' and accepted ways of making revolution. But is the PNDC revolution a real revolution? Many still say yes.

Adotey Bing

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‘WOMEN IN NIGERIA’ AND EDUCATION

‘Women in Nigeria’ is an organisation of women and men which holds that while both men and women are exploited and oppressed by Nigeria's socio-economic system, women are even more oppressed than men. Thus the organisation feels that the whole structure of society needs to be made more just, while paying particular attention to the position of women.

The theme of the Third Annual Conference of ‘Women in Nigeria’, held in Port Harcourt at the end of April 1984, was ‘Women and Education’. The theme reflects the profound importance education plays in providing the individual with the basic and necessary tools for informed interaction and participation in Nigeria today. Women make up more than half the Nigerian population, and have always contributed fully and unstintingly to the development and betterment of society. Their continued contribution and full participation require that they have access to the benefits of formal and informal education, to the same level and of the same quality as that given to their male counterparts. Only in this way can women provide their full input to the socio-economic development of Nigeria.
Tsikata criticised those who want to theorise about the revolution without the concrete problems faced by the process. Those who talked glibly and arrogantly of deviation, militarism and even fascism he termed ‘super revolutionaries’ who were blind to their own lack of revolutionary humility and their petit-bourgeois commitment to the revolutionary process. These remarks clearly indicate that the divide between the PNDC and a section of its ‘natural’ constituency is still considerable and that the PNDC or at least important sections of it still regard themselves as actively advancing revolutionary struggles.

In his independence anniversary speech in March 1984, Jerry Rawlings affirmed the commitment to a National Assembly which would be ‘truly representative and democratic with respect to the interest of the ordinary people of this country’. Although we can expect the National Assembly to be established in the immediate future in the continuing absence of ‘a mobilising structure’, by which was perhaps meant a party, it is difficult to see how the people will be able to deepen their revolutionary understanding and strengthen their ability to control the other branches of the state. Is a party in the offing?

While these events have been going on the PNDC has been coming out with measures that tend to confirm its continued radical commitment, for example, the new wealth tax introduced in August 1984. In the same month the chairman of the PNDC and a number of Secretaries went on an extended visit to Latin America especially to Nicaragua and Cuba but also to Surinam and Guyana.

Despite what has transpired in the two and three-quarter years since 31 December, the PNDC is still affirming its revolutionary intent. The two most important progressive organisations, the June Fourth Movement and the New Democratic Movement, are still working with the regime. Each new revolution, it seems, establishes a new ‘orthodoxy’ and accepted ways of making revolution. But is the PNDC revolution a real revolution? Many still say yes.

Adotey Bing

* * *

‘WOMEN IN NIGERIA’ AND EDUCATION

‘Women in Nigeria’ is an organisation of women and men which holds that while both men and women are exploited and oppressed by Nigeria’s socio-economic system, women are even more oppressed than men. Thus the organisation feels that the whole structure of society needs to be made more just, while paying particular attention to the position of women.

The theme of the Third Annual Conference of ‘Women in Nigeria’, held in Port Harcourt at the end of April 1984, was ‘Women and Education’. The theme reflects the profound importance education plays in providing the individual with the basic and necessary tools for informed interaction and participation in Nigeria today. Women make up more than half the Nigerian population, and have always contributed fully and unstintingly to the development and betterment of society. Their continued contribution and full participation require that they have access to the benefits of formal and informal education, to the same level and of the same quality as that given to their male counterparts. Only in this way can women provide their full input to the socio-economic development of Nigeria.
The Conference was attended by people from all over Nigeria and included teachers, students, journalists, administrators, lecturers and research specialists. Over thirty papers were presented. After three days of analysis and discussion the conference participants reached the following conclusions:

A Federal Ministry of Labour report of 1971, which states that 'A Nigerian Girl has equal opportunity for education as a Boy', is wishful thinking. In every state of the Federation there are more boys receiving formal education than there are girls. For example in Borno State only two girls are in school for every five boys. While generally at primary school level the percentage of girls is 30-40 per cent, at secondary it drops to 20-30 per cent and at tertiary level it is only 10-15 per cent.

Not only are there more boys than girls in schools but also there are more schools (and school places) for boys than there are for girls. In Kaduna State there are three times as many boys-only schools as girls-only schools.

Therefore 'Women in Nigeria' calls on State and Federal Governments to create more school places for girls since at present, though there are more girls in the population than there are boys, the girls are competing for far fewer school places.

Another factor which reduces women's participation in education is social prejudice against girls' education. Thus for example, 76 per cent of families in one study would educate their sons and not their daughters if finances were limited. Another study showed that sons are more likely to get educated but that girls' chances of education increase if their parents are in a high socio-economic group.

'Women in Nigeria' wishes the government to engage therefore in a strong and positive drive to enrol more girls in schools. Fees for school should not be charged at any level since this discriminates against all children of parents in the lower socio-economic groups, but particularly against female children.

Not only are there fewer girls receiving education, but even those that do, receive a different type of education from their male counterparts. Girls are always encouraged to follow subjects related to the home, the family, arts and social sciences in order to be qualified to take up jobs as secretaries, nurses, teachers, caterers, etc — the 'acceptable', 'feminine' occupations. Very few girls are encouraged to study the science subjects with the aim of following technological and scientific careers. In fact many girls are actively discouraged from doing so.

Women employed in technical and mid-level occupations constitute only 8.4 per cent of the total employment figure. This is hardly surprising since at college level the figure of women enrolled on these courses is very low. In Nigerian Universities, of the total enrolment figure only 10-14 per cent are female, and the highest percentage of female enrolment occurs in the Faculties of Education, 29.9 per cent, and Arts and Social Science, 28.8 per cent. In the Scientific and Administrative Faculties the figures are much lower: Administration, 4.2 per cent; Engineering, 1.0 per cent; Law, 9.4 per cent.

It is for the above reasons that 'Women in Nigeria' strongly supports the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in their protest against the reintroduction of school fees. The organisation urges the government to enter
into dialogue with the students in an effort to find a solution to the funding of education.

In addition 'Women in Nigeria' calls on the Government and the media to introduce a campaign actively encouraging females to study science and technology subjects. More emphasis and importance should also be placed on science subjects in girls' schools.

Where people have had little or no chance of formal education in their youth, Adult Education becomes a necessity. Women form the majority in this group. However not only are there fewer adult classes for women, but the types of subjects taught do not enhance the positions of women economically. Studies indicate that while mens' adult education includes training in trades such as carpentry, welding, etc, the women are only instructed in what are considered to be 'feminine' fields, e.g. cooking, sewing, home economics, etc. This perpetuates the situation where women work only at home and earn hardly anything from their labours. The disparity in access to adult education classes is not just between men and women, but also between women of different socio-economic groups. For example most womens' adult classes are attended partially, and in many cases wholly, by the wives of highly placed men in the society. Similarly the rigid hours fixed for these classes contributes in limiting the number of women who enrol. The nature of womens' responsibility within the home makes it imperative that there is more than one option for the women to attend these classes.

'Women in Nigeria' asks all agencies dealing with adult education (governmental and non-governmental) to open up more adult education classes for women in both rural and urban areas. The organisation also recommends equal access to all categories of women and a review of the curricula so that women can also be trained in the higher income earning trades. Flexible hours must be incorporated into the programme as a way of encouraging enrolment.

For women already working, on-the-job training should be made part of their training programme since women with families find it difficult to go for further training. Trades' Unions are asked to particularly note this factor. The well-meaning attempts of the present government to solve the present economic mess are however likely to reduce educational opportunities for the majority of people, and especially for women, and generally result in a further erosion of the living standards and progress of Nigerians. It can be shown that the great majority of Nigerians (approximately 75 per cent) earn no more than N1,500 per year.

The reintroduction of hospital fees; the increased retrenchment of workers; the reintroduction of poll taxes; the ever-increasing shortage and high prices of consumer essentials and the non-payment of workers' salaries will all contribute to a further deterioration of living standards for the vast majority of Nigerians. After having lost their jobs and spent all their money on essentials like food and soap, it will be a miracle if most parents will be able to pay school fees. Once again it will be women who are hardest hit.

At present it is the woman who has to make the meagre salary stretch so that the whole family can manage to survive on it. She spends hours in the market searching for the cheapest goods or a cheap alternative. In the rural areas it is also the woman who has to work harder and longer coaxing the land to produce more to feed her family — including in some cases the workers and teachers who
have not been paid for months. Without this unpaid, and unrecognised, 'labour of love' by women, many people would have been in an even worse position than they are now.

But instead of applauding women for their role in keeping the economy going it seems that women are being seen as the ultimate cause of the present social and economic situation. The focus of the 'War Against Indiscipline' traces the lack of social discipline to children's indiscipline which is taken to be solely the responsibility of women (mothers). 'Women in Nigeria' protests strongly against this trend. Men (fathers) are equally responsible for children's discipline. More importantly, the government focus sidetracks the central issue which is why it should be the case that people may work all their lives and still not be able to educate their children or be assured of a decent old age.

Similarly 'Women in Nigeria' condemns the Kano State Government's pronouncement that 'single women' should get married within three months or be 'dealt with'. The organisation would question the moral basis of the men making the pronouncement; the material basis of forcing women into marriage for economic sustenance instead of encouraging them to engage in productive work; and the discriminatory basis in not saying that single men should also get married or be similarly dealt with.

'Women in Nigeria' would like to appeal to the Federal Military Government to intercede with the Algerian Government on behalf of the Algerian women (one of whom is a heroine of the anti-colonialist national struggle), imprisoned without charges or trials since December 1983, for protesting against the reintroduction of discriminatory laws.
Reviews


Mahmood Mamdani is one of a select group of scholars who have persisted in the attempt to bring coherent analysis to the increasingly violent complexities of recent Ugandan politics. In this publication he concentrates on the period 1971 to 1979, claiming that it is ‘the first book to make a serious and unsensational study of the Amin regime and to explain the reasons why it survived so long’.

The book is structured chronologically, although there is a confusing degree of overlap between certain chapters. In the first part of the book, Mamdani provides a succinct account of the context in which Amin came to power. He examines the colonial impact on Uganda, painting a vivid picture of a society deeply divided by class, race, religion, region and ethnic identity. In the 1940s militant nationalists began to unite the disparate elements of Ugandan society against British rule, prompting the Colonial Government to depoliticise mass organisations and promote a new reformist political leadership from the upper stratum of the petty bourgeoisie. The ultimate effect of this policy was the disintegration of the nationalist movement into a number of feuding parties, all of which were reformist in ideology, sectarian in support and partially reliant on overseas sponsorship. When the Uganda Peoples’ Congress came to power in 1960 it could only survive a series of crises by using the army and security services to subdue its opponents. Mamdani argues that in the ‘Move to the Left’ of 1970 President Obote took a new direction, simultaneously attempting to muzzle popular discontent while establishing a greater degree of independence from the imperialist powers. The result was the military coup of 1971, led by Amin but, according to Mamdani, ‘engineered by an alliance of foreign imperialism and local reaction, with the people standing on the sidelines’.

In the remaining two sections of the book, the author examines the nature of the Ugandan state under Amin and the changing pattern of its external relationships. He argues that the Amin regime can legitimately be described as ‘fascist’ as it initially exploited popular discontent through revolutionary slogans and xenophobic actions, but ultimately used the surplus extracted from the masses to build up a militarised state machine which functioned to the advantage of a small clique of beneficiaries. Militarisation, xenophobia and repression, Mamdani argues, contained the seeds of the regime’s eventual destruction. The country was deprived of reliable agents for foreign monopolies, the productive base of the state collapsed and the masses were provoked into various acts of overt and covert resistance.
In the final section of the book Mamdani argues that the unstable regime of General Amin, unable to establish a domestic social base, turned to a bewildering array of external powers for support. The author details the regime’s external relationships, focusing on the military support provided by the USSR, the British and American connection with Uganda’s murderous security services, and the economic links established by American, German, Japanese and Indian companies as British interests withdrew from the country. Mamdani illuminates the important role played by local neo-colonial states such as Egypt, Pakistan and Kenya. The latter, he argues, ‘played a crucial mediating role between the Ugandan economy and the world capitalist market’, but also acted as a means whereby political pressure could be exerted by Britain on the Amin regime. Eventually, of course, the imperialist forces which had sponsored the Amin coup came to regard his regime as an embarrassing liability. The Kagera invasion, designed to keep a mutinous army occupied and to woo the American government, actually provided an ideal opportunity for the Western powers to topple Amin behind the facade of Tanzanian intervention.

This book is a welcome addition to the small volume of works on Ugandan political economy. It is concise (115 pages), inexpensive £2.95) and readable. It brings together a good deal of hitherto scattered data and makes a brave attempt to explain events and relationships that have sometimes appeared to defy structural analysis. While focusing on the period 1971-79, it provides some useful clues about the nature of Uganda’s current crisis.

The book is, however, flawed in a number of related ways. Firstly, its frame of reference is unclear. It purports to analyse ‘the government, society and the economy in Amin’s Uganda’, but fails to answer a number of important questions that could and should be posed under this agenda. What, for example, was Obote doing in exile during this period? What was his relationship to opposition groups within and outside the country? How important was the personality of Amin in determining the nature of the Ugandan state at this time? What part did ethnic and religious conflicts play in Ugandan politics under Amin? Exactly what kind of support did the Western powers give to Tanzania during the liberation war?

Secondly, many readers will disagree with certain aspects of Mamdani’s analysis, particularly on important subjects such as the class basis of Uganda’s political parties prior to independence or the significance of Obote’s ‘Move to the Left’. Disagreements are to be expected, of course, but it is disappointing that Mamdani makes no attempt to relate his analysis to the work of Nabudere, Mittelman, Twaddle and others. In particular, the book makes no reference to John Saul’s important article ‘The Unsteady State’ published in ROAPE No.6, 1976, which includes a sophisticated critique of Mamdani’s earlier publications. Moreover, given that fascism is a central theme of the book, it is unfortunate that the author makes no reference to the extensive debate that surrounds this concept and its applicability to African and other underdeveloped states.

Finally, while the book is strong on empirical investigation, it is less convincing in the area of theoretical analysis. As Mamdani’s sparring partner, Wadada Nabudere, has commented in his Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda (Onyx Press, 1980), Mamdani is inclined towards theoretical eclecticism. That is certainly true of this book, which at various stages appears to draw its inspiration from nationalist historiography, orthodox Marxism, vulgar Marxism, neo-Marxism and populism. This is not necessarily reprehensible, but the author’s
introductory declaration that he is ‘anti-fascist and pro-people’ does little to inspire confidence in the subsequent analysis.

Jeff Crisp


Is there any chance of imperialism initiating and championing industrialisation in the ‘Third World’? This question has been at the root of a growing and on-going debate between the Underdevelopment/Dependency Theorists (UDTS) and their Marxist critics. The UDTSs who arise primarily as critics of bourgeois modernisation theories, argued that there has always been a link between underdevelopment in the ‘Third World’ and development in the West and that imperialism cannot industrialise the ‘Third World’ in any serious way. Marxist critics, on the other hand, have argued that there is no reason to believe that capitalist industrialisation is impossible in the ‘Third World’ given that expansion is the primary force of the capitalist mode of production. The challenge then is to underpin its class implications.

Onimode, following classical UDTSs, argues that Nigeria’s underdevelopment had its origins in the 15th century with the European slave trade and was entrenched through colonialism. Today, underdevelopment is sustained through neo-colonialism. Onimode’s prime objective is to debunk the distortion of the Nigerian reality by bourgeois modernisation theories. Yet, this book is likely to arouse unease among radical scholars in and of Nigeria, especially among those who take a critical view of the UDTSs.

To begin with the concept of imperialism. According to Onimode, ‘as processes of the expansion of capital, inequality, domination and exploitation are the fundamental variables of imperialism’ (p.3), and he proceeds to argue that differential power relations between weak and strong nations have always been the starting point of imperial relations. Over-population, land hunger as well as the will to criminality through plunder have propelled nations throughout history to imperialism. He goes on to identify four phases of imperialism — mercantilist imperialism, free trade imperialism, monopoly or corporate imperialism and multilateral imperialism. These ‘four phases of imperialism have been identified with respect to their productive forces, property relations and dominant ideology. These stages are rooted in different modes of production’ (p.4).

Onimode’s explanation of imperialism is not rooted in the inner contradictions of capitalism that compel it to expand and internationalise. For Onimode, imperialism is essentially a relationship involving the domination of weak states by more powerful ones. This definition robs the concept of imperialism of its historical content and specificity as a particular stage of a specific mode of production — capitalism. How are we to distinguish between the Roman Empire and the British Empire, for example? Moreover, Onimode’s is a state-centric definition which misses the centrality of classes and is unable to see imperialism as we know it today as the rule of international monopoly capital. The expansion of capitalism is explained by such subjective factors as the ‘will to criminality’.
Clearly, this is not a radical departure from some of the variants of the bourgeois definition. We must go beyond subjective factors to the objective contradictions of capitalism that compel it to expand.

But why is such a faulty notion of imperialism so central to Onimode? It is because it enables him to adopt a definition of underdevelopment rooted in the extraction of Nigeria's surplus to Britain and other Western countries as part of the imperialist determination to keep Nigeria backward. In the scooping away of Nigeria's surplus, the West is aided by such institutions as the IMF, IBRD and the multinational corporations (ch.10). Is Onimode suggesting that no accumulation takes place in Nigeria? How does one explain the growth of some form of industrialisation, which Onimode acknowledges in his book? A rigorous understanding of imperialism reveals that, contrary to Onimode, imperialism does have an interest in the expansion of capitalism in Nigeria because that is the way it can expand its accumulation and reap more surplus value.

What precisely is underdevelopment? Like most other UDTSs, Onimode does not offer a precise definition. But insofar as it can be inferred, the following are central to his understanding of the concept: (a) repatriation of Nigeria's surplus over the centuries up to this day; (b) lack of independent national development; (c) lack of technological innovation; (d) mass poverty, starvation and unemployment. Nigeria, Onimode argues, cannot expect to undergo any serious development under imperialism since its principal contradiction is between development in the West and underdevelopment in Nigeria and other 'Third World' states.

To begin with the notion of profit repatriation by the MNCS. What happens if they were to re-invest all their profits, stopping all repatriations? Who will benefit from that? Certainly only the dominant, ruling class in Nigeria. The impression that Onimode creates to the effect that an end to profit repatriation would leave Nigerians the better is clearly misleading. For the greater benefits that will result will only accrue to the Nigerian bourgeoisie. As Onimode himself noted, the dramatic increase in the resources available to the Nigerian state following the oil price revolution of 1973 actually led to a greater exploitation of the oppressed classes of Nigeria. Talking of independent national development, Onimode forgets that the globalisation of capitalist production has ensured that whatever capitalist development that takes place anywhere cannot be independent of international finance capital of which the Nigerian domestic bourgeoisie is a part and parcel. What about mass poverty and unemployment? Far from being signs of the impossibility of capitalist development in this era, they are the products of that development in Nigeria.

What is the role of the domestic bourgeoisie in Nigeria? Onimode sees them as mere agents of foreign capital with which they collaborate to underdevelop the country. The central line of attack on them throughout the book is pitched on their 'unpatriotic' treachery in colluding with the West. But it is not clear why the domestic bourgeoisie should be content with being mere agents. Do they not have their own specific material interests to protect and advance? The description of this class as 'unpatriotic' is based on Onimode's belief that they have betrayed a nation. Yet it is not obvious why this class should be expected to lead the anti-imperialist struggle in Nigeria since it is itself part of the imperialist domination of Nigerian workers and peasants. Throughout the book, the local bourgeoisie is chastised not because it is a class of exploiters but that its members are insufficiently national. Foreign capital is attacked not principally because it is
bourgeois but because it is foreign.

Regarding the peasantry, Onimode details the manner of their incorporation into the capitalist exchange process and how huge surpluses have been appropriated from them in the colonial and post-colonial periods through the marketing boards. Onimode explains the continued appropriation of peasant surplus after independence in part by asserting that after the British imperialists left, 'their domestic petty-bourgeois successors have characteristically been too lazy and too engrossed in partisan benefits to their class to alter it' (p.166). More rigorous explanations could be offered.

Where has Nigeria's oil money gone? Six areas on which the huge petro-Naira have been 'squandered' are identified: military expenditure (which rose from N29.2m in 1966 to N1,166.7m in 1976); highly inflated contracts; frivolous and extravagant festivals like FESTAC; the Udoji bribe; theft and embezzlement; grandiose, white elephant projects. But is it enough to dismiss the manner the oil revenue was and is still being spent as purposeless and useless? For the way in which the oil revenue is spent flows from the logic of capital, even if inefficiently. The issue is to recognise this logic and underpin its class implications.

Nigeria is once more under military rule. Onimode's book written well before the December 1983 coup devotes a whole chapter to analysing the military regimes in Nigeria up to 1979. He points out correctly that far from being neutral, the military regimes all had a clear class bias. Onimode argues that '... the class character of the military regimes can be investigated with respect to such parameters as the command or officer corps of the military, their parental, social and residential background, the class affiliation of the officers in terms of contacts between civil and military spheres ...' (p.188). This approach lacks the rigour of a materialist analysis which situates the class position of any social category on the basis of the position it occupies in production and its relation to the means of production. After all, Gowon's father was a poor man in Wusasa. He cannot be said to have had a rich background prior to rising to power.

What is the solution to Nigeria's contemporary problems? For Onimode, given that imperialism cannot 'develop' the country, the only way out is 'an anti-imperialist struggle for the radical structural disengagement of the country from the exploitative orbit of the international capitalist system' (p.1) and for 'the socialist restructuring of Nigeria' (p.240). What emerges is that the socialist solution is posited as a mere development strategy and not an historic necessity arrived at on the basis of the class struggle. The socialist alternative therefore becomes an ideological question.

Lacking an adequate theory of imperialism and underdevelopment, Onimode's arguments take on a startling ad hoc, inconsistent character even within the same chapter. For example, on the one hand, the export of capital is said to be no longer crucial to imperialism (p.7) and, on the other hand, capital export is said to be central to imperialist exploitation (p.7). Or in another instance, the 1975 coup is said to have been inspired by oil MNCS in Nigeria but, at the same time, the man who led it, Murtala Mohammed, is said to be Nigeria's most progressive leader so far. The impression one gets is that, for Onimode, what matters is the argument of the moment.

On a final note, the political danger which the UDTS in Nigeria face is that their anti-imperialist rhetoric may be co-opted by the domestic bourgeoisie which is not
averse to their nationalist protestations against foreign capital. But as experience has shown, this domestic bourgeoisie will not hesitate to crush any passionate advocacy of socialism in the country.

Adebayo Olukoshi

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**Current Africana 26**


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